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October

2007

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038



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COMMENT

I've seen the future of British motocross GPs – or rather I've seen bits of it, quick flashes of colour between the heads of other fans who made it to Donington Park. Okay, so I'm being a little tongue-in-cheek here – and not entirely fair either – but you can't argue with the fact that spectator viewing was a little on the limited side, especially compared to Foxhill, Gore Basin and Matterley Basin where the natural lie of the land made visibility so much better.

Ever since we got a British GP back on the calendar a few years after the Y2K Foxhill wash-out we've been bumped around the country – from the Isle of Wight to Winchester via Ringwood and while the tracks have been great, the facilities (or the ferry crossing) have let them down. Let's face it, no-one wants to witness Sunday night scenes of spectators being towed out of muddy car parks so the future of big race meetings in this country has got to lie in the direction of purpose-built facilities with plenty of hard-standing, good transport links and decent access roads. Just like, er, Donington Park!

Arriving and leaving was a surreal experience – I kid you not, 20 minutes after getting in my car I was on the main road and heading home. Compare that with the two weeks it took to get out of the MXdN and you get an idea of how a facility like Donington ticks so many of the right boxes. But it doesn't tick them all and this is where a few lessons can be learned.

I know the theory behind contained circuits such as Donington being great for the TV audience (and for the people filming the racing) but television viewing figures aren't the be all and end all of GPs. It's also vital for the sport that the events get a good spectator turn-out – the number of fans make the difference between losing money and never running a GP again or making money and doing it all over the following year. But to get the fans back you've got to look after them, make their day – or weekend – worthwhile and I didn't see too much of that at Donington.

I'm not going to get into the whole 'tickets were too much' argument – motocross is still a comparatively cheap sport to go and watch – but whether you're paying £5 or £35 to get in it's only fair to expect pretty basic facilities such as enough toilets. If we're to turn a British GP into a proper family day out – and maybe even attract families from outside the sport to come and have a look – then the last thing they need is to be forced to wait in line for 20 minutes to relieve themselves, especially if all they've got for in-queue entertainment is the sight of a row of men going for the al fresco option.

Okay, that's what I didn't really want to see covered so let's go back to what I did want to see – and didn't get to see a lot of – and that's the racing. I bumped into an old mate of mine and his son on the Sunday afternoon and he reckoned that unless you staked a spot by the fencing early doors then you were never going to get a proper look-in. Having the fans corralled around the outside of the circuit is always going to restrict viewing and – even worse – having the perimeter fence so far from loads of the actual track is going to kill much of the atmosphere as well. I'm not 100 per cent sure of the reasoning for this but as an educated guess I'd say health and safety had something to do with it. Now given the scenes the previous weekend in Ireland, lending a bit of thought to H&S isn't a bad thing – so why were there so many people blatting around on pitbikes all weekend? Even at, say, Foxhill where you could virtually reach out and touch riders as they went past the chances of a fan getting wiped-out by a racer were minimal. Especially when compared against the chances of getting T-boned at Donington by a 10-year-old with whisky throttle!

Right, now that all the negativity has left my body it's time to say a huge well done to Tommy Searle for his Donington overall. Cairoli may have been racing in the MX1 division but Tommy beat everyone who was there to be beaten and he can't do any better than that. But while the 'future' of British MX did the business, one of the highlights for me was watching the 'past' of British MX doing the business n'all! There were grown men with tears in their eyes as Dave Thorpe rolled back the clock and raced to a fourth world crown in the new FIM Senior division and even the Berkshire Bomber himself looked a little emotional at the end. Well done DT!

PS Finally this month, a quick hello to the motley Cornish crew I, ahem, stumbled across during the early hours of Sunday morning. Good to meet you lads – and thanks for the helping hand...

Sean



Josh Coppins – the most unlucky man in MX?

THE END IS NIGH!

Bou, Cairoli and Ra on wrap up world crowns as the season signs off

IT'S VIRTUALLY all over bar the shouting at world level for '07 with Toni Bou wrapping up the trials crown, Antonio Cairoli taking honours in MX2 and Steve Ramon lifting the MX1 championship. All that remains to be decided from the 'big three' off-road disciplines are the WEC titles and at this stage of the game there are unlikely to be any shocks.

Of course, just a few rounds ago we would've been saying the same thing about the MX1 crown with Josh Coppins sitting pretty at the top of the pile, a massive 107 points clear of Ramon. But after breaking his shoulder blade in Czecho he was forced to sit out two GPs before returning at the British GP where the pain was simply too much for the rock-hard Rinaldi man.

After pulling out of the second moto and losing his season-long championship lead, Josh then retired on his stool and opted to sit out the final GP at Lierop – and in the process gifted the title to the super-consistent Ramon. He ain't known as Steady Steve for nothing.

For Josh it's been a bitter pill to swallow. "Obviously I'm very disappointed, more than that, it is difficult to explain in words how I feel right now.

I have been putting so much effort into the pre-season and it all seemed to pay off with a huge lead prior to Loket.

"But in the end it proved not enough when you get hurt like I did, that's the hard reality of motocross racing. I'm focusing already on next year and I absolutely want to grab the title then. I have proven to myself, my team and Yamaha that I can do it and they are 110 per cent behind me."

Last month we identified 'the Curse of the Kiwi', pointing out that a number of Ben Townley's mates – as well as Coppins you can include Tyla Rattray in there – had seen their seasons prematurely curtailed. Well, we've now uncovered another MX curse and, sorry to say, this one's a little bit closer to home.

For our GP preview in the September issue we spoke to Stephen Sword and Gordon Crockard about what a home grand prix means to them. Shortly afterwards the pair both crashed out at Namur, picking up season-ending injuries.

So beware 'The Curse of DBR' – and if you get a call from us (or Ben Townley for that matter) better hang up quick!

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Final standings

Four-Stroke

1	Wayne Smith	331 points
2	Mark Hucklebridge	319
3	Jody Smyth	243
4	Danny Smyth	242
5	Brad Anderson	240

U21s

1	Ray Rowson	411
2	Jamie Law	303
3	Ashley Greedy	260
4	Kristian Whatley	259
5	Alex Snow	206

Ray Rowson's the new British U21 champ



© Toby Fuller

DOUBLE TOPS!

S mith and Rowson lift their four-stroke and U21 crowns

WAYNE SMITH and Ray Rowson are the new British Four-Stroke and Under 21 champions. After an 11th-hour decision by the ACU to cancel the final round at Hopwood and with no other suitable venue available in time Pontrilas becomes host to the seventh and final round of the series.

With defending thumper champ Brad Anderson away on grand prix duty it's down to Mark Hucklebridge to cancel out Smith's 44-point lead and he can do no wrong from the off in race one by quickly taking the lead from Bryan MacKenzie to claim the win with Smith in a lowly eighth. A real surprise is Steven Clarke, fresh from the USA, taking a fine runner up spot.

The Monster can't do more than take maximum points again in race two but Smith pilots his PAR Homes Honda to a safe and sensible point-scoring ride in ninth to claim his first four-banger crown.

Molson Kawasaki's Rowson has one hand on the Under 21 trophy going into this final round and is as dominant as he's been all season long to take a pair of convincing wins – that's 11 wins out of a possible 14.

Only Jamie Law has a sniff of a mathematical upset but a fifth and fourth on the day are good enough to finish runner up in the standings ahead of Ashley Greedy who rides well enough at Pontrilas to collect a brace of seconds.

ART ATTACK

YUP, WE hadn't heard of the MXdN having an official artist either but it does – and the man in question is from that well-known US State called Derbyshire!

Rob Kinsey's now in his fourth decade of feverish MX-love and this passion for the sport is reflected in an amazing back catalogue of two-wheel based canvases. His subjects include James Stewart, David Bailey, Ron Lechien and Stefan Everts and his work will be on display at Budds Creek.

A gala dinner is being held at the Budds Creek event to celebrate the success of past Team USA riders such as Danny Chandler, Ricky Johnson and Jeff Ward who will be presented with their own prints.

For more of Rob's work, commissions and details of how to buy limited edition prints check out www.robkinsey.com

David Bailey as painted by Rob Kinsey



RULE BRITANNIA?

Easy tips Tea GB for des Nations glory

OKAY, SO despite the injury to James Stewart the Yanks still start favourite for this year's Red Bull-backed Motocross des Nations at Budds Creek on September 22/23. But they're not the only leading country with selection problems which gives British team manager Mark Eastwood every reason to fancy our chances.

First off, Mark confirmed the final three-man team he'll be taking to the US. "It's definitely Tommy, Billy and James, 100 per cent. A lot of people have been talking about Brad Anderson because of his British championship results but James has beaten him at every opportunity at world championship level.

"I think we've got a really good chance. It's going to be difficult to win it but why not? I think they can do it. Tommy's solid so all we need is James to go well and for Billy to have one of his days and we'll be right in it. Stewart's out for America, the French won't be as strong as they would have been and Belgium have lost Stribos."

In Stewart's place Team USA have drafted in his Kawasaki team-mate Timmy Ferry alongside Ricky Carmichael and Ryan Villopoto while Jeremy van Horebeek has taken Stribos' place for Belgium and lines up with Steve Ramon and Ken De Dycker. French former world champ Christophe Pourcel misses the event through injury so Pierre-Alexandre Renet steps up alongside Seb Pourcel and Nicolas Aubin.

Other fancied nations include New Zealand – although there's still a big question mark over the fitness of Josh Coppins who was due to team up with Ben Townley and Cody Cooper – and Italy who field Antonio Cairoli, David Philippaerts and Davide Guarneri. But Irish hopes received a blow when Gordon Crockard crashed out in Namur. In GC's place Tommy Merton will join forces with Martin Barr and Wayne Garrett.

The following weekend the world's best trials riders will be on the Isle of Man for the 2007 Trial des Nations on September 30 with Spain starting as hot favourites.

World champ Toni Bou leads the Spanish into battle backed up by Adam Raga, Albert Cabestany and Jeroni Fajardo. The British team is lead by Dougie Lampkin with Graham Jarvis, James Dabill and Shaun Morris riding shotgun.

SEARLE AT SHEFFIELD

BRITISH GP hero Tommy Searle is the latest top rider to sign up for the Future West Sheffield SX.

The factory KTM rider goes into the event at the city's Hallam FM Arena on November 3 on the back of a stellar 2007 season that's seen him rise to second in the world MX2 championship. But while outdoors he would start the hot favourite, indoors is another matter and he'll have to contend with more experienced supercross riders including Carl Nunn and Lewis Gregory and American star Mike Brown.

US KTM factory rider Jeff Alessi and fellow American Jason Thomas will also have their sights set on the top step of the podium. Other talent from over the pond comes in the form of six-time Canadian MX champ JS Roy and former British SX champion Colton Facciotti.

Sheffield tickets are on sale now from the Hallam FM box office on **0114 256 5656**. Tickets for round two at the Liverpool Echo Arena on January 25/26 are also available on **0844 8000 400** or online at www.accliverpool.com

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**On the cover: DT wins
the Senior world title –
just like old times,
eh Dave?
(Sutty)**

**Contents: Aussie
Hayden Rhook gets a
taste of Maxxis action
at Brampton
(Sutty)**

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WIN!
KING DAVID'S
RACE KIT

WIN!

WIN!

KING DAVID'S RACE KIT

IN A comeback more thrilling than any of **Rocky Balboa's**, **King David Thorpe** of **England** recently wrapped up yet another world motocross championship win at **Donington Park**. In a bruising battle of attrition **DT** beat down his Belgian challengers to take world title number four – that's 22 years after winning his first.

To celebrate **DT's** epic win we slipped right around to his camper moments after the race and mugged the champ of his retro **No Fear Honda** race kit then slapped around the **Sixsixone** boys until they sobbingly agreed to supply a replica lid and pair of boots to the winner of this competition as well. Sweet!

To get your own hands on **Thorpey's kit** – and **Sixsixone** Thorpey replica boots and helmet too – all you have to do is go online to www.dirtbikerider.com and answer this easy **King David** related question (if the internet confuses you and stuff we'll also accept postal entries to the address at the end). So tell us in what year did **King David** win his first world motocross championship?

Is it: (A) 1965
(B) 1895
(C) 1985
(D) 1995

When you think you've figured out the answer log on to the internet and dirtbikerider.com in particular then follow the links to the competition page and answer it there. Or you can send it here (along with your name, address, a daytime telephone number and your preferred size of helmet and boots) to – **Win Thorpey's Kit, DBR Magazine, 12 Victoria Sreet, Morecambe, Lancashire LA4 4AG.**

The first correct entry picked randomly after the closing date of **October 14** will win **DT's No Fear** kit and a new **Sixsixone** helmet and pair of boots in their own size.



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STERLING SILVER!

Weston gears up for 25th birthday blast

WITH THE 25th running of the Weston Beach Race coming up faster than a fully tapped CRF450 running a two-tooth rear sprocket, the big news is that previous winner and 10-time world champ Stefan Everts has signed up – and will take on newly-crowned MX1 world champ Steve Ramon.

To celebrate their Silver Jubilee, organisers are inviting back as many past winners as possible. So while Everts and Ramon will start among the favourites, they better keep an eye out for original Weston winner wily Willie Simpson sneaking past on one of the dunes! Willie's son Shaun's also entered as is former British and AMA 125cc champ Mike Brown and four-time enduro world champ Paul Edmondson with more big names certain to be announced in the run-up to the race on October 20/21.

But Weston's not just about the glory of winning the three-hour thrash on the Somerset sands. For many it's simply about survival – and raising a ton of cash for charity in the process.

One man on a mission in the name of Leukaemia Research is Simon Lees who plans to race Weston and then the Blackpool Beach Race two weeks later. Simon – whose cousin was recently diagnosed with leukaemia – started with the goal of gathering a grand for the charity but has now upped his target total.

Simon's had the smart idea of getting a race shirt printed up which has been signed by a shedload of two-wheel stars including Brad Anderson, Gordon Crockard, James Noble, Mike Brown, John McGuinness and Nicky Hayden. This will be auctioned off and the money raised added to his sponsorship total to hopefully push him past the magic £2500 mark.

www.riderappeal4leukaemia.webeden.co.uk is the website to go to for more information and to sponsor Simon. For general Weston stuff go to the official event website at www.wbruk.com

Sponsor Simon and do your bit for a very worth cause



GORDON CROCKARD

KNOCKED OUT...

...OR SHOULD THAT BE CROCKED OUT? GC GOES DOWN HARD AT NAMUR AND LOSES 24 HOURS OF HIS LIFE!

WORDS BY GORDON CROCKARD PHOTO BY MAGNUS ANDERSSON

WELL THAT'S the last time I ask you lot to wish me good luck! Remember how at the end of my last column I asked you all to wish me good luck? Thanks to anyone who did but it didn't really work so good! A friend sent me an inspiring text on the Saturday morning of the Belgian GP at Namur. He wrote this... 'Oi, oi GC! Sit down, close your eyes, remember the good feeling and the joy of watching your heroes race round Namur, then the great days of living your dream of racing that legend circuit. Keep it simple, keep it fun, keep it real!'

I took Elly Belly's advice but I think I may have closed my eyes when riding the bike. Only joking! That didn't happen but I did lie on the track for over 10 minutes with my eyes closed while I was knocked clean out. Along with being out cold and suffering major concussion I had also shattered my left collarbone into five pieces, snapped my first rib in two, bruised my lung and chest so bad that a month later it's multi-coloured and taken most of the skin off from my wrist to my elbow.

My first post-crash memory came over 24 hours later in hospital in Namur when I began to realise who I was and where I was. Really bad experience in all as I was there on my own and extremely confused. My mechanic Phil had come to the hospital on the Saturday after my crash which was in qualifying and stayed with me until late in the night. I kept asking him over and over again some basic questions. So much so that he wrote down the details of what had happened, who I was and even some diagrams to help me understand. Amy was at home and I called her to explain what had happened. "Hi, I've fallen off the bike and I'm in hospital in Namur." Trouble was I made the same call six times and after each conversation I'd forget I'd just spoken to her and phone again.

I got home and slept for a week, only waking to go pee or eat. I had appointments with all the top men in Belfast to have my collarbone scanned and that showed it to be shattered with no chance of surgery to have it plated. I have my next scan on September 10 to check how it's knitting together. My rib's also aching but it will heal okay.

I was devastated to miss my home GP at Moneyglass but attended to support the event and represent my sponsors as best I could. It ripped the heart right out of me being there and not being well enough to ride but I put a brave face on and tried to be upbeat and positive to everyone I spoke to.

One thing I won't forget is the superb determination and skill Toni Macaroni showed the whole world he had in the second MX2 moto. He crashed at the start, buckled his front

wheel, lost six spokes and his tear-offs and still came from the back of the pack. Two of the biggest jumps on the track he wouldn't even do as I reckon he was scared of collapsing his front wheel and he still pulled three seconds a lap on Tommy Searle who was leading. Awesome! I watched with Tommy's manager Jamie Dobb and his mentor Stefan Everts but they weren't as thrilled by the fasta pasta munching Italian winning as I was. I felt bad for Tommy though but he'd been beaten by the fastest MX2 rider in the world, including America.

On the Thursday before the GP of Northern Ireland, Phil and I joined some friends at the Dundrod Road Race or Ulster Grand Prix. I'd never been before but knew the circuit and had watched it on TV plenty. Brave men doing huge speeds on bumpy roads scares me but they obviously get such a buzz out of it they're willing to take the risks. Crazy is an understatement to try and describe the danger.

On the Friday at the MX GP we went to some local sponsors for a catch-up over a cup of coffee. The home races are my chance to promote my local backers and give them some media exposure so missing out on competing was a blow to giving them something back. That night a rare opportunity came up to go see a music gig where The Hothouse Flowers were playing. We went for the craic and it was a bit of fun.

After the GP I left for Spain on the Monday. I went to rest and recover and try to escape the reality of how my season has ended. A friend of some friends I have here in Spain was asking me how I hurt myself and when I told him it was a motocross accident he went on to tell me he used to do the film programming for the Paris Bercy SX back in the '80s and '90s – he even remembered Jeff Stanton and JM Bayle as being the main men at the time. Small world I thought – but a good one (easy for me to say sitting on the beach of the Costa del Sol with the sun on my face and sea air in my lungs!).

Take it easy y'all...



Adam Jones' Stripper Flipper ain't quite ripper enough to take the Best Trick gold medal at X



X-RATED!

There's so e hot action to be had at X Games 13 in LA

Photo by Frank Hoppen

HOLY SCHMITZ! If you ain't seen any of the footage from this year's X Games Best Trick finals then you need to get online and search YouTube until your eyeballs start bleeding. With a wide selection of truly amazing backflip combos being thrown down thick and fast over the 75-foot gap, some of the footage is truly unbelievable! And what's even more unbelievable than the hours of extreme footage is the actual result of the one-hit trickfest.

Beating the more familiar freestylers to the gold this summer is heavily tattooed 21-year-old X Games virgin Kyle Loza who rocks up, pops a body varial over the 45-foot superkicker and goes home with the gold medal slung around his neck. Seems the riders4christ.com demo rider really does have gold on his side!

Another newbie who's not so lucky is Scott Murray. Murray's drafted in as a wildcard rider after showing the event's head honchos some seriously sick ass footage of the previously

unheard of rider pulling a trick only one man has ever even attempted in competition – the double backflip. Rotating to within 30 degrees of pulling off Travis' trick, the 29-year-old from Michigan eats ***t big time and is physically unable to take a second shot at it.

But what about the seasoned Best Trick specialists? Freestyle gold medal winner Adam Jones wraps up second with a Stripper Flipper ahead of Todd Potter, Mat Rebaud and Jeremy Lusk while Metal Mulisha main men Brian Deegan and Jeremy Stenberg can only nail down eighth and ninth.

In other X Games news Ricky Carmichael wins gold in the somewhat disappointing six-man Moto X Racing event, Mark Burkhardt beats Jeff Ward to take the SuperMoto win and Ronnie Renner stakes claim to the Step Up gold medal reaching a lofty 33 feet – that's like five and a bit Lawlesses, dude – in the process.



CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

It's tight as a tick as both
AMCA classes go down
to the wire

Words and photo by Mike Wood

FOLLOWING RACES at a very wet Condover, Kerry, Warmingham and Wymeswold, the 2007 AMCA MX championships both look like producing photo finishes with just two rounds left to run.

In the MX2 class Phil Mercer led the way before a dramatic moment at Warmingham when he fell in moto three and was unable to restart his green machine. His failure to score points meant that he was briefly leap-frogged in the championship table by reigning king Brad O'Leary.

The man in form though in MX2 is Lancastrian Lee Payne. After switching from Honda to Kawasaki, Payne has recorded three consecutive podium placings to hold third in the standings ahead of Mark Hooley, James Lane, Matt Porter and Owen Delaney.

Up in the Open class, Ben Saunders and David Campbell have produced a stunning display of motocross racing, winning between them 13 out of the 17 races held. Ben currently leads the way just 11 points ahead of David in a great tussle that looks certain to go right down to the wire. Apart from those two the other moto winners so far in the Open class are Clinton Barrs, Aaron Poolman and Charlie Hollis.

In the championship standings Hollis holds the third spot at present but with the consistent Aaron Crowder, Barrs, Simon Lane and Rick Du-Feu in tow and breathing down his neck, the racing will certainly be red hot in the remaining two rounds at Walterstone and Nympsfield.

Series standings

MX1

1 Ben Saunders (Race Connections Honda)	385
2 David Campbell (Honda)	374
3 Charlie Hollis (Invek Foods Honda)	273
4 Aaron Crowder (Sandifords Honda)	262
5 Clinton Barrs (Wildmoor/Wulfspport Honda)	235
6 Simon Lane (Honda Equipe)	233

MX2

1 Phil Mercer (Delkevic Kawasaki)	275
2 Brad O'Leary (FotoX/AMS KTM)	262
3 Lee Payne (Malin Floors Kawasaki)	243
4 Mark Hooley (ServoRacing KTM)	199
5 James Lane (Honda Equipe)	187
6 Matt Porter (Select Homes Honda)	184

ALL CHANGE!

THERE'S A new venue for the final round of the BYMX series, originally pencilled in for Hawkstone Park on October 6/7. Due to track maintenance at the famous Salop track, the nippers' finale will now be held at Brookthorpe on October 7 after the Severn Valley club came riding to the rescue.

For entries get in touch with the ACU MX department by phone on **01788 566400** or email at **moto.cross@acu.org.uk**

STEPHEN SWORD

DÉJÀ VU!

**STEVIE'S KILLER COMEBACK COMES TO A COMPLETE HALT
AT NAMUR AFTER AN ARGUMENT WITH A HAYBALE...**

WORDS BY STEPHEN SWORD PHOTO BY ALEX HODGKINSON

THINGS TOOK a turn for the worse last month! Everything was getting back on track for me until the fifth lap of the first practice at Namur. I clipped a haybale which made me crash – the unlucky thing was that the bike landed on my foot, crushing it against the ground. Immediately I knew something was wrong as the pain was pretty bad. It was the same foot as my old injury but I didn't have any pain around my ankle so I knew this was a new injury.

I got back on the bike and nursed myself back to the pit box where I took my boot off and could see that there was already a lump developing just below my toes. The mobile medic centre has an x-ray machine so I headed in there to be told by the doctor that I'd broken three bones and would need to have them pinned. I was devastated. My Belgian doctor – Dr Claes – was at the track and he came over to see me, we had a chat and he arranged for me to come back over on the Wednesday to have surgery.

I'm gutted to be missing the rest of the season and I was so looking forward to the British GP. But I guess things could have been much worse, especially as my old injury isn't affected. So I headed back out on the agreed day to get operated on – the amount of times I've been in that hospital in the last 18 months is not normal. I'm on first name terms with all the staff and they put me in the same room almost every time – although this time I ended up sharing a room with a mad South African who goes by the name of Tyla Rattray! Tyla was in having surgery on his knee ligaments and we had a laugh and a good chat about all kinds of stuff. Sam (Tyla's girlfriend) was good company for Jodie – normally the WAGs get the raw deal with us motocrossers as they take us to hospital, sit by the bedside, hang around while we get operated on and then sit by our bedside again while we sleep off the anaesthetic.

I was wheeled down to theatre where they told me I wasn't going to be put to sleep although luckily they planned to numb me from the waist down so I wouldn't feel any pain. What a strange feeling that is – I was chatting to the doc throughout the whole thing who was basically talking me through the op and reassuring me that everything was going well. It's a weird, weird feeling watching your legs being lifted up and down and not being able to feel it. Anyway, the operation went well and they wheeled me into the recovery room where I was greeted by Tyla before we were both carted off to find Jodie and Sam who were waiting for us with much-needed food and drink.

I only had to stay in for one night so the next day we made our way home. My foot was painful and swollen for a few days but after that it's been feeling good. The pins stay in for three weeks, then I have them removed, then I have to

wait another three weeks before I can start walking again. At times things are difficult but staying positive is a must. I'm a racer so obviously I want to be racing and doing well. My focus is now all on next year so I'm going to get myself fit again, start enjoying normal everyday life, have a good winter training and testing and come out fighting for the start of next season – I've got a two-year contract with Molson Kawasaki so nothing changes for me there. Roll on '08!

I drove up on the Sunday to the British GP at Donington although I must say I don't like watching when I should be racing. All the same it was good to catch up with the fans, sign some autographs and watch DT take victory in the Vets race. And well done to Tommy Searle for taking his first GP overall as well.

I haven't really been up to much else and I'm pretty limited to what I can do on crutches. I've been going to the gym most days just to get out of the house more than anything. With the pins in my foot I can't put any weight on it but I can still do upper body weights and by the time you read this the pins should be out and I'll be well on my way to recovery – I reckon a nice little golfing break's what's needed to get that foot moving again!



Whippety doo dah...

...WHIPPETY AY, my oh my what a wonderful day! Under the watchful eye of manager Jamie Dobb, Tommy Searle lays a flat one to celebrate his debut GP overall victory at Donington Park and send thousands of British MX fans home happy!

Photo: still-mx.co.uk





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JEFF HARRIS PHOTO

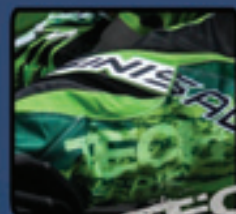


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WORDS BY STEVIE MILLS PHOTO BY SUTTY

CROWD CONTROL!

ORGANISERS MAY HAVE PERFORMED A MINOR MIRACLE TO GET THE MONEYGLASS TRACK IN SHAPE FOR THE POINTS-PAYING GP RACES BUT WHAT HAPPENED TO THE SECURITY?

FIRSTLY, CREDIT where it's due, Joe Coburn and his team worked miracles on the Moneyglass GP track late into Saturday night which basically allowed racing to happen at all. By Sunday afternoon the circuit was in tip-top condition for the world's finest riders to strut their stuff, providing exceptional racing in the second MX2 moto.

Local interest was placed firmly on the shoulders of Dixon Yamaha pilot Martin Barr who scored points in his home GP. Confidence in abundance, one week later at the British GP Martin recorded 10th position overall – a personal best in grands prix. For sure Martin is teasingly on the edge of breaking into the 'big league' where he can start to earn recognition and a decent living for his efforts in 2008.

poor for European GP standards. Weather (in August) – crap and it's hardly likely to be better the last week in September.

On the domestic championship front, it's looking like Wayne Garrett will mirror the success of his team boss Phil McCullough. McC won all four domestic titles in 2006, a feat that had never been achieved in the history of Irish MX. Well Wayne has already secured the Ulster Open class series – his first ever adult championship – and the Moto-One KTM rider is having a fantastic season and currently leads the remaining three championships.

Tommy Merton aboard his Rainey Brothers Honda has all but filled the number two podium position in the Ulster series but the battle for the

final step on the podium is very much alive going into the final round with Mike Sinton on the GOMX Russell's Honda holding a mere two-point advantage over Richard Bird. Simply the most improved rider on the Irish motocross circuit in 2007, Ricky Bird has always had a turn of speed but now the RS Freight sponsored racer has both consistency and fitness to match.

Budds Creek USA is the venue of this year's Olympics of motocross and the Irish MXdN team is still unconfirmed. Crockard, Barr and Garrett were to have formed one of the strongest Irish teams on record but Gordon's recent injury should rule him out of the squad, leaving reserve rider Tommy Merton to fill the vacant slot in the team.

To be honest and pretty brutal, without Crockard on the team it will be a tough – near impossible – to see our team making the Main Event on the Sunday. Sure Martin is improving on the world stage and with a good gate could just pull us through the qualification races. Wayne and Tommy are great riders at home but to expect them to perform at the highest level in the USA is a bridge too far.

Where does GC go from here? How long can Gordon keep going back to the

well? Surely there are only so many injuries and disappointments that a guy can stomach before crying enough! Simply the biggest talent to come from these shores, I firmly believe that there is another British championship in Gordon and a chance to earn a living from the sport.

Spending a fortune travelling the globe with no prize money or realistic chance of being signed by a team that would actually pay a decent wage is madness. If I were GC I would race the British championship, DEP series, KWS Internationals and a selected few GPs in '08. Take a year to get back into the winning races and enjoying racing again, then who knows...

No Belfast Supercross! It will for sure be a long winter without the Belfast International Supercross pilgrimage to look forward to this year. I hope Matt and the crew will be back next year. I guess we will have to make do with the Dirt Worx Mini SX series and indoor practice track in Ballyclare. Dates should be available soon so watch this space.

Speaking of minibike action, James McFerran is leading the ACU British champs with only one round remaining. Nephew of Brian Steele, James is making a name for himself on the mainland aboard his Monstermoto.co.uk competition minibike. It would be great news to have another British champion from this side of the pond so keep her lit James!

Stevie



MARTIN BARR SCORES POINTS IN IRELAND AND THEN IMPROVES TO RUN TOP 10 AT DONINGTON PARK

Now it must be said that while the actual preparation of the track was exceptional, there were major failings in the basic internal structure of running the event over the weekend. Security was a shambles and talk is that only one-third of the people who attended the GP actually paid to get in. I agree that there is a small element of pond life that would walk 20 miles through cow poo to avoid paying the entrance fee – but two-thirds!

I need to hold on to my belief that near on all of the people that drove to Moneyglass on Sunday morning did so with the intention of paying a nominal fee to gain access and enjoy a world class event. That being the fact, many people that I have spoken to told me that there was simply nobody at the gate to accept money from the punters.

The only other big gripe from the spectators' point is that the best viewing bits are from the infield or in the middle of the track. As Steve Ramon so clearly pointed out, this is dangerous! The Suzuki rider nearly landed on a bunch of spectators who breached the security and watched from the prohibited zone.

Do you honestly see the des Nations being staged in Ireland one week away from October? I would love to see it happen, just as I would like to win the lottery – unfortunately the probability is that it will not happen. Mr Srb and co will have taken a few notes away with them following the Irish GP. Crowd control – poor. Crowd in general – pretty



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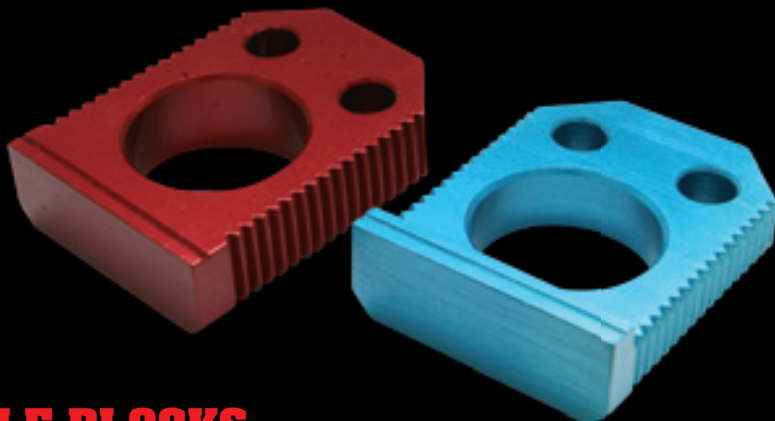
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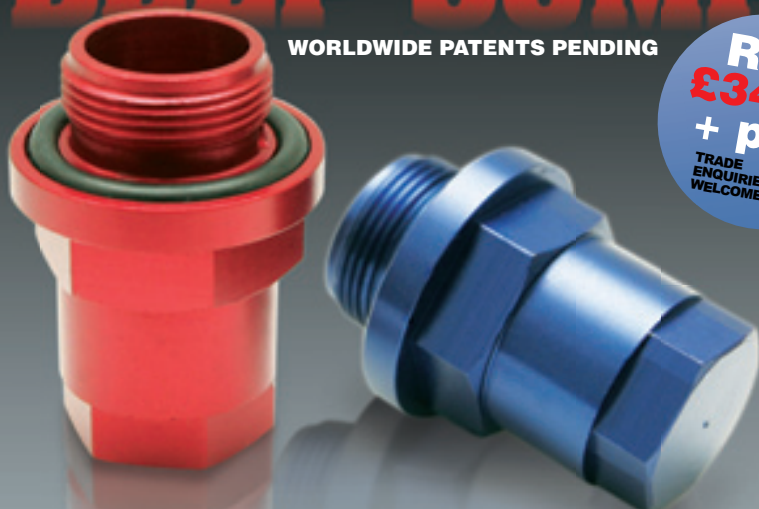
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JONTY'S BOX

WORDS & PHOTO BY JONTY EDMUNDS

SIX APPEAL!

WITH MANY OF THE WORLD'S BEST RACERS STAYING AWAY FROM THIS YEAR'S ISDE IS IT TIME THE FIM LOOKED AT INTRODUCING AN ENDURO DES NATIONS?

THE INTERNATIONAL Six Days Enduro is an event that's many different things to many different people. To the hundreds of amateurs that compete each year it offers the chance to be a part of one of the world's biggest off-road motorcycle events – an event in which they get to compete side-by-side with the world's best. To the FIM it symbolizes all that is good about off-road motorcycling with an annual 500-strong entry which, in their eyes, shows just how vibrant enduro sport has become. The more the merrier seems to be the viewpoint of the FIM as the event enters its eighth decade.

There is no denying that the ISDE is an event steeped in history. Known to many as the 'Olympics of Motorcycling' it has long held pride of place in the international enduro calendar. But it seems that the event's appeal is fading and, with a growing number of the world's best enduro racers opting not to compete this year, the six days is fast becoming an event that means less and less to the very best. To some it has already become more of an end-of-season inconvenience than an important, prestigious competition.

So why have many of the world's best riders decided to give the event a miss this year? Well, there are a number of different reasons why the likes of David Knight, Seb Guillaume, Ivan Cervantes, Mika Ahola, Bartosz Oblucki and Stefan Merriman have all opted not to compete in Chile. The need for end-of-season operations, disputes between manufacturers and national federations, events taking place at the same time as the ISDE and in Mika's case the fact that he's been there and won it before mean that each rider has his own reason for not attending. Whether they will return in '08 only time will tell.

The fact that everyone and anyone is welcome to enter the ISDE has had much to do with the shine having been taken off the event in recent years. As the six days gets easier in order to cater for the ever increasing entries many recent ISDEs have failed to live up to expectations. With most problems arising from the tail end of the entry, the knock-on consequences have a direct effect on the Trophy and Junior Trophy classes and their eventual results. With the quantity of riders competing seemingly much, much more important that the quality of the competitors taking part, events have become increasingly geared towards the masses – and that does little to encourage the elite. While the FIM view the increase of rider numbers being added to the bottom of the entry list as a good thing it is having a direct effect on the number of 'pros' drifting away from the event and possibly even the long term future of the event.

Mixing the world's best with amateurs has worked perfectly for decades but mixing the world's best with too many amateurs and an alarmingly high number of riders not capable of finishing a one-day national club enduro is another. With more and more riders entering, the number that are then withdrawing from the event after only a couple of days is also increasing.

So what's the solution? Two things could be done in order to revive the six days – and the FIM are against both of them! First off why not limit the number of entrants to something like one Trophy, one Junior Trophy and three Club teams per country which would raise the competitiveness of the event? Limiting the number of teams would see a drop in income for organising clubs but it would also shift focus back onto the Trophy and Junior Trophy team competitions. Club team riders would still be free and welcome to compete but it would be the best of the best amateurs representing each country which in turn would make the Club team competition more competitive.

The second solution is to introduce an Enduro des Nations event – one in which a select number of E1, E2, E3 and EJ class riders would represent each nation. Held over fewer days and geared towards challenging the world's very best, a more dynamic inter-country event run along the same lines as world championship competitions would both add something new to the international enduro calendar and complete the set as an event that would sit comfortably alongside the Trial des Nations and the Motocross des Nations.

One thing that the FIM can ill afford to do is nothing. Unless they deliver either a slimmed down ISDE or an Enduro des Nations then the ISDE will likely continue to swell in terms of rider numbers while conversely the number of 'top' riders will shrink. The ISDE needs a face-lift and it needs one sooner rather than later.

QUANTITY - NOT QUALITY - SEEMS TO BE ALL THE FIM ARE CONCERNED WITH WHEN IT COMES TO THE ISDE



While steeped in history the ISDE has been slow to move forward into the 21st Century. Not really any different to the way it was moons ago, the event trades on its past glories while races like the Barcelona Indoor Enduro and the Las Vegas Endurocross are rapidly growing in popularity. With the world's best able to fly in, race and fly home in a weekend, in offering prize money, simplicity and global exposure they are already casting a serious shadow over the ISDE.

The ISDE is an event that needs to remain an important part of the international enduro scene. But it will only do so if the FIM accept the fact that some fairly radical changes are needed.

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All letters/emails must be accompanied by a full address. Oh and please don't send emails all in capitals. Cheers!

LETTERS WIN PRIZES

Write to Rant, get your letter published and you'll win a one-litre trigger bottle of marvellous bike cleaning fluid Muc-Off. And if we rate your letter highly enough you'll also receive our monthly star prize – this month a pair of white/black/green Etnies Variant shoes.



LUCKY LAUREN!

My name is Lauren, I'm 14 and female. I ride a KX85 big wheel but I'm outgrowing it rather quickly – I can't quite fit on the 125 yet although I do have a 2005 KX125 at home. I have had a go of it – just a few laps – but I can't seem to control the bike in the air – on my 85 I can now whip it (a little bit)!

I don't race yet but I really want to race my 85 before I really do outgrow it – I have attached a few pictures of me riding for you to see what you think. I've been riding for maybe two-and-a-half years now, my first real motocross bike was a KX65. I wasn't good on it – always at the back and it did really put me down knowing that I was not very good! I knocked myself out and managed to lose all my confidence – great!

I moved up to a YZ85 small wheel. No change, I was slower than ever but trying my hardest. I was absolutely rubbish but the thing was I love the sport so being not so good was never holding me back from wanting to ride.

Moving on again, my dad bought me a 2007 KX85 – the bike I have now – and my riding style has totally changed. I'm finally doing okay in the sport. I don't think I'd have been able to be as good as I am without the help of a few people – one of them being Pat.

Pat is an amazing rider and if he carries on the way he's going he could get somewhere in the sport – he inspires me to be honest. When I see him ride I want to ride even more! Thanks to him and many others – my dad, brother etc!

Lauren, via email

Glad to hear you're enjoying riding so much – keep up the good work and keep having fun!

SMART ALEC!

Dirt Bike Rider is the best motocross magazine in the whole wide world. Is there any chance you can bring it out bi-weekly?

Alec, via email

We're pleased you like the mag so much but we only have plans to keep it monthly at the moment. Keep an eye on dirtbikerider.com for a more regular off-road fix.

BUY GUY!

The magazine's good but I think you should have a page about buying bikes so people don't go out and buy a lemon. You should also put a classified page in so people can advertise their bikes and stuff.

Adam, Scotland

Adam log on to dirtbikerider.com and you'll find plenty of information about buying used machines in the Buy and Sell section. If you want to see a classifieds section you'll find the world's largest weekly-updated off-road classifieds section in our sister publication T+MX News that's available each and every Friday from a quality newsagent near you.

BEEB BOOB

Why is it that the BBC or even ITV can't be bothered to show motocross on the telly. Just one week after soaking up all the action of the British GP at Donington I had to spend a Sunday on the sofa soaking up a massive hangover due to drinking excess amounts of apple beer. During this time I watched coverage of the Moto GP (boring) and an equestrian event (even more boring) but couldn't find a thing to quench my need for motocross.

Now I don't pay my licence fee (admittedly) for the Beeb not to give me what I want. Why can they spend millions on producing boring tosh like their Moto GP coverage but not cover the MX1 – or even better MX2 or AMA series – when awesome footage is already available?

Dave, via email

It's a mystery to us too mate. Do you remember how cool it was when the BBC showed the New Year's Day race from Hawkstone and some British championship rounds too. And who can forget the epic battle of Farleigh footage from '85 – golden days!

WESTON WORRY

I hear there's gonna be a holeshot prize at this year's Weston Beach race – 500 quid no less. How small a rear sprocket do you think I'll need on my CR500 to ensure I win the prize?

Dick Dastardly, via email

I would say that if you want to win the holeshot prize then you'll have to run a sprocket that's slightly smaller than the one that's going on Sully's KXF450 mwahahahahahahahaha! With three month's wages on the line for the first rider who reaches the top of the beach the tubby fella is well fired up for this one!



PIT RACERS

I've been a motocross fan for many years and I feel compelled to write to you on what I believe to be a very important issue. I attended the Donington GP – what a great track with great facilities – and wondered if the organisers have ever heard of health and safety?

Allowing mindless idiots to ride around public areas on various types of motorbike is an accident waiting to happen in my opinion and I witnessed one of these idiots almost collide into a woman pushing a child in a buggy. This sort of stupidity can and will give our sport a bad name, after all if you go to any club meeting or practise track what's the first thing you're told? No riding in the paddock.

Many thanks for providing us fans with a great magazine.

Martyn, Hertfordshire

I have to agree with you Martyn, there's really no good reason why anyone should be speeding through spectator areas on a motorcycle. They wouldn't do it down their local shopping mall so what makes them think it's okay to do it at a motocross GP?

ROYAL RIPPER!

I thought I would send you a couple of pictures of what – at six month's old – must be one of your youngest readers. William was so keen to find out more about dad's new KTM EXC450-R in the Three Kings article that he decided to rip the page out and eat it. Dad was obviously not impressed!

James, via email

What can we say? They sure were some tasty looking pages...



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212-MX

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Need classy custom graphics or pre-printed backgrounds in a hurry? Then call Tristan at 212-MX! With just days to play with Tristan designed, printed and trimmed these awesome Team DBR graphics for Greg Hanson to use as he went forth to win the Seniors race at the Veterans World Cup at Donington. Unfortunately for Greg – and Tristan – the FIM entries secretary doesn't work to such tight deadlines and refused Greg's last-minute entry – wangle! – and so like Greg the graphics went unseen by the masses. To see the sort of stuff you missed out on log on to Tristan's awesome website then give the enterprising young chap a call to out your order. To see more of Greg Hanson keep your eyes peeled for a legendary comeback performance real soon! No pressure, eh Greg? Price: Call for details

Supplier: 212-mx.co.uk

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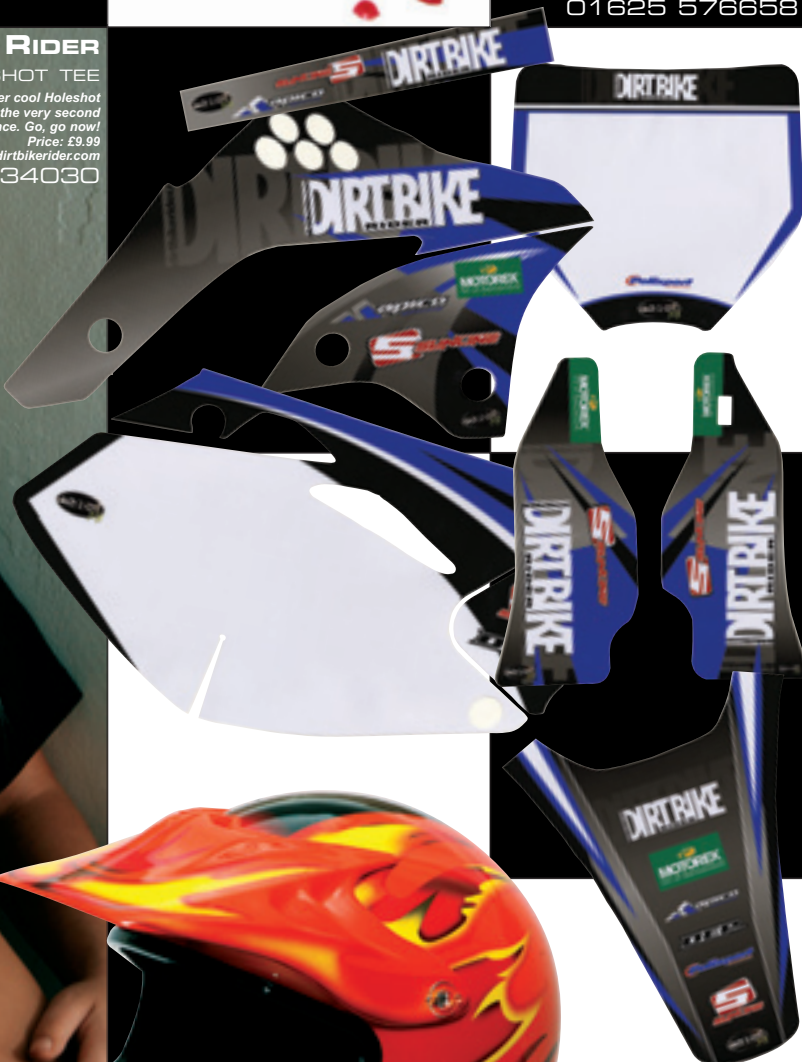
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KAIS

PERFORMANCE SUSPENSION PRODUCTS

"Boing!" says Zebedee, who is quite frankly not all that trustworthy when it comes to setting up suspension on the DBR dirt scoots. That's why we always reckon it's better to get someone in who really knows about spring rates, shims and stacks and stuff – someone like Nick at KAIS. KAIS Performance is a family run business that has been servicing its customers' needs since 1979 – that's even longer than DBR has. And as well as servicing KAIS are now able to offer their very own range of suspension springs straight talkingly named in a no nonsense northern style – KAIS Performance springs. KAIS performance springs are manufactured using high quality special clean chrome silicon wire with each individual spring going through the most arduous coiling, tempering, scrapping and grinding process to ensure it's the perfect length and shape. The springs are then shot-peened and checked for quality before finally being powder-coated. The final results are springs that are more than capable of dealing with the massive demands the sport of motocross makes of them.

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ANSWER

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Some conspiracy theorists reckon that Rod Hull's untimely death had nowt to do with high winds or TV aerials and he was in fact set up by his fine feathered friend. It's rumoured that Hull's sidekick set a slippery Emu oil trap after coaxing the green jelly loving celebrity onto the roof of their pink windmill with the offer of a snog with Grotbags. Of course that theory is total tosh although the aforementioned super soothing but oh-so slippery Emu oil is as real as eggs are eggs. Apparently Emu oil is the new big thing in joint and muscle relaxant but has been used for years by the indigenous tribesmen of Australia – that's the non-convict population hohoho! So if you wanna bend like a boomerang – and let's face it who doesn't – check out some Emu oil today!

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Irish GP

*King Cairoli!
Tony C regains
his crown in
Northern Ireland*





KING CAIROLI!

Tony C secures the crown, Steady Steve closes in on Coppins and To y Gun co es ever closer to snatching his first GP win...

Words and photos by Suttty

WITH REIGNING MX2 champ Christophe Pourcel sprawled on the track during Sunday morning warm-up with a dislocated shoulder and broken pelvis – broken like his dreams of retaining the world title – Tony Cairoli doesn't need to start another race all season to wrap up this year's championship. But born to be a racer, the Sicilian throttle jockey blazes to a double victory in Ireland just to punctuate the point of who is best! Eet's a Tony eh?

And in a weekend full of negativity – “the weather is crap,” almost everyone, “for me the

track was really dangerous,” Davide Guarneri, “the holes in my shoes are letting in water,” Suttty – Tony C and British Lion Tommy Searle's on-track performances are a positively positive thing that warm the hearts of everybody.

It's the crappy weather that's the key cause for all the other problems but after a late start on Saturday and a condensed qualifying system the track's not actually in that bad a shape come race day. Sweet!

As the gate drops for MX2 moto one it's Nicolas Aubin on the Ricci Racing Yamaha who

gets the early lead but Tony's out in front when the pack break the finish line timing beam while Nico, Rui Goncalves, Carl Nunn, Guarneri and Tommy Gun fill the top six.

As Tony eases his way clear at the front Searle crashes a couple of times before finding wide sweeping lines that allow him to carry enough momentum to break free from the gloop and clear some of the scarier sized jumps. But by the time Tommy's moved past Goncalves for second Tony's long gone.

Crossing the line almost 23 seconds



Billy Mac rides the ruts on his way to sixth overall

clear of Searle, the party's well under way by the time Tommy – who himself must be secretly celebrating Christophe's demise as second in the series is now very much a probability rather than a possibility – gets there.

With the world championship wrapped up, moto two is all about s**ts n' giggles for Cairoli. Tony probably doesn't see the funny side when contact with Sarholz KTM's Marcus Schiffer leaves his front rim Pringle shaped but he has to be laughing like a loon inside his Airoh come the end of the 35-minute moto...

Between races Tommy's entourage – that's Dobby and Everts – advise him that since he's

already jumping the hardest doubles on the track he should crack on and jump all the doubles in the next race. And full credit to the lad because that's exactly what he does – first lap too!

Starting second behind Goncalves, Tommy lines up the Portuguese Silver Action rider over the first of two back-to-back doubles built in front of the main spectator area, then when Rui backs it down to single-single the second Searle keeps his KTM pinned and hucks the gap. The flight and landing are far from pretty but the ballsy move gets the job done and lucky to still have his tackle intact, Tommy gets on the gas and works overtime to try and increase his lead.

While Searle and Goncalves pull away from the pack the champ's still mired deep within it stuck behind Schiffer and Champ KTM's Jeremy Van Horebeek – who's said to be Belgium's next Stefan Everts – for what seems like way too long for the Sicilian to ever challenge Searle for the lead. But never underestimate the speed and determination of Tony C – even with a dangerously buckled front wheel!

With six laps to go Tony's 20 seconds back from Tommy, three laps and the gap's down to 10 and the last lap, well on the last lap there is no gap. And with the overall win on the line the pair head into the sand section at the back of



A no-score in the opening moto kills TC's chances of a top 10 finish

NOTES FROM AN EMERALD ISLE



Fan frenzy!

While the Irish fans love their motorsports they're not great fans of staying behind feckin' fences and rather than watch the action from the safety of the designated spectator areas spend most of the weekend roaming through the 'public prohibited' infield like wildebeest in the Serengeti.

To be fair to the race fans – who'd spent up to £30 to get into the Moneyglass circuit – the infield was by far the best place to watch the racing. But with Health and Safety of utmost importance to Youthstream the claimed 18,500 fans (yeah, right) were herded back behind fences for the second motos.

Ba-ba-ba-boom!

The deep conditions at Moneyglass contribute to more motor related DNFs than at a normal GP as the saturated but still super sticky soil simply sucks the life from the highly tuned engines.

Luck of the Irish!

With home country hero Gordon Crockard out injured and Tommy Merton, Luke Wilde, Wayne Garret and Richard McKeown unable to scrape through the timed qualifying session it's up to Bike-It Dixon Yamaha rider Martin Barr to uphold Irish pride in Moneyglass.

Bumped from the points in moto one after an epic scrap with team-mate Carlos Campaño, the Swift Suzuki boys and Swede Marcus Norlen, Barty bounces back to finish a fine 14th second time out! Well in Martin!

His team-mate may move closer to the points lead but Kevin Strijbos tops the MX1 podium

the track wheel-to-wheel.

As Tommy navigates the rutted right-hander – the one that's within shouting distance of Our Lady of Lourdes church – Tony runs into his back wheel and bobbles giving Tommy a three-second reprieve which should be enough for the 18-year-old to go forward and claim his maiden overall GP victory. But should be never comes into it as just two corners later Tommy overcooks it and runs wide leaving the door open for the champ who slams it shut in Tommy's face before motoring on to the chequered flag to claim his 18th GP victory! Tommy picks himself up for second – both in

the race and overall.

If Josh Coppins – no doubt sat at home watching the races live on mediazone.com – had not enjoyed the MX2 battles he must have been clapping his hands with glee (or he would have done if the pain from his shoulder injury would allow him to move in such a way) as his closest MX1 championship challenger Steve Ramon hits trouble at the start of both MX1 races.

Trying try too hard to make up time after a duff start in race one, Steady Steve mistimes a double he's not jumped before, runs wide and finds himself off the track and on the deck. A

controlled ride from the back of the pack nets Ramon eighth place and 13 valuable championship points.

And the first lap of moto two is no better for the Suzuki star. Ricocheting off a sheep-sized stone – the Moneyglass circuit has a plethora of 'em inches below the loamy surface – Ramon finds himself once more on the wrong side of the green netting. Another controlled ride sees Steve finish fourth, clawing to within 12 points of the injured MX1 points leader.

While neither rider are contenders for this year's world crown CAS Honda's Ken De Dycker and Ramon's team-mate Kevin



Noble gets on the gas after Verhoeven, Renet, Allier and Barragan



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Big Ken just misses out on a podium on the CAS Honda



Results

MX1

1	Kevin Strijbos	(WMX GP Suzuki)	22+25=47
2	Sebastien Pourcel	(GPKR Kawasaki)	16+22=38
3	David Philippaerts	(Red Bull KTM)	18+20=38
4	Ken De Dycker	(CAS Honda)	25+9=34
5	Steve Ramon	(WMX GP Suzuki)	13+18=31
6	Billy MacKenzie	(KRT Kawasaki)	14+16=30
7	Julien Bill	(Martin Honda)	15+15=30
8	Pierre Renet	(NGS Honda)	10+13=23
9	Kornel Nemeth	(TEKA Suzuki)	11+12=23
10	Marvin Van Daele	(Shineray MX Team)	6+14=20
14	Mike Brown	(CAS Honda)	12+0=12
15	James Noble	(Multitek Honda)	0+10=10
20	Brad Anderson	(Pioneer Yamaha)	3+3=6
25	Mark Jones	(Wulfspport Kawasaki)	0+1=1

MX2

1	Antonio Cairoli	(De Carli Yamaha)	25+25=50
2	Tommy Searle	(Red Bull KTM)	22+22=44
3	Rui Goncalves	(Silver Action KTM)	20+20=40
4	Marcus Schiffer	(Sarholz KTM)	13+18=31
5	Jeremy Van Horebeek	(Champ KTM)	12+14=26
6	Davide Guarneri	(Ricci Racing Yamaha)	15+11=26
7	Jeremy Tarroux	(Silver Action KTM)	9+16=25
8	Manuel Monni	(3C Yamaha)	10+9=19
9	Carl Nunn	(Bike It/Dixon Yamaha)	14+5=19
10	Carlos Campano	(Bike It/Dixon Yamaha)	8+10=18
12	Sean Hamblin	(Swift Suzuki)	3+13=16
14	Gareth Swanepoel	(Molson Kawasaki)	0+15=15
16	Tom Church	(Molson Kawasaki)	0+12=12
19	Martin Barr	(Bike It/Dixon Yamaha)	0+7=7
23	Jason Dougan	(ForkRent Suzuki)	4+0=4
26	Elliot Banks-Browne	(Swift Suzuki)	1+0=1

Tommy Gun comes within less than a lap of his maiden GP overall



Stribbos thrill the fans with a bruising battle for the win in moto one. It's actually Keeno's team-mate Mike Brown who yanks the holey, almost sliding off in the process (a feat he does manage later in the lap – go Brownie) so by the end of lap one it's the #9 CAS Honda that's out front with Stribbos' Suzuki stalking its every move.

The lead changes hands several times during the early part of the race with Ken coming straight back each and every time Kevin moves ahead. And even when Stribbos does make the pass stick for a few laps mid-race it's Ken who comes out on top long-term. Factory KTM riders Jon Barragan and David Philippaerts battle for the third and final podium place with the #7 bike finally taking control three laps from home.

Moto two sees Seb Pourcel spring to the front in the early going with Billy MacKenzie, Philippaerts, Stribbos and Brownie all right in the mix. On lap four Pourcel makes a mistake and drops to fourth leaving Stribbos in front with Brown a safe second until engine gremlins cause the CAS Honda to slow down then stop.

Pourcel climbs back to second by the race end moving ahead of Philippaerts who's struggling with "some small throttle problems" but still hangs on to the final podium place.



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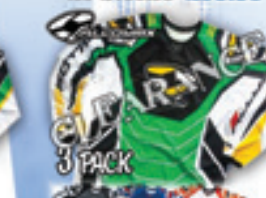
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NOUVELLE CUISINE!

The British GP serves up a feast of newness with a new venue, new MX1 winner, new MX1 series leader and new home-grown MX2 winner plus a new 'old' world champ. Hurrah for new stuff we say!

Words by Sean Lawless Photos by Suttly and Magnus Andersson





Race one MX1 action with Billy Mac (211) leading very early doors from Josh Coppins (6), Mike Brown (4), Kevin Stribos (2), Steve Ramon (11), Tanel Leok (5) and Ken De Dycker (9)



NEWLY CROWNED '07 world MX2 champ Antonio Cairoli steps up a division and wins first time out while 'Steady' Steve Ramon lives up to his nickname to move past an injured Josh Coppins and take the lead in the MX1 title race.

But the big, big news – for us at least – from the British GP at Castle Donington is Tommy Searle's debut overall win in the MX2 class which lifts him past the sidelined former champ Christophe Pourcel into second in the championship standings.

"This is definitely the best moment of my life," grins Tommy Gun fresh from the top step of the podium. "With everyone here I couldn't have done it at a better place than my home race."

Tommy gets out the gate well in the first MX2 moto but it's the opening quali race winner

Nicolas Aubin who sticks his Yamaha in front and despite the roars of the crowd Searle just can't get within striking distance. But the Red Bull KTM rider has matured at lightning speed during only his second full season of GPs and has a definite game plan.

"Aubin was riding really well but I knew whatever happened if I'd have won the first one and he'd won the second he would have got it so still going into the second race it would be even – that was the one I knew I had to win. So I wasn't so fussed about the first race – I wanted to win but I knew it wasn't as important as the second."

Of course, his game plan is only as good as his second race and Tommy makes no mistake as the gate drops for moto two. The 18-year-old leads every lap and despite pressure in the closing stages from surprise French package

Jeremy Tarroux he stays strong to the end and pulls out an eight-second gap at the flag.

Amazingly, Tommy doesn't rate his race two performance all that highly. "I didn't ride too well in the second – I was so nervous," he admits. "I knew I had it in me to go but I couldn't get it out of me because I was so tense. But when he came alongside I just went for it and dropped him straight away."

Tarroux's race two runner-up finish earns him second on the day from Aubin who can only manage a fifth in race two. Next best 'Brit' behind Searle is Molson Kawasaki's South African import Gareth Swanepoel in seventh who backs up his fighting fourth in the opener with a disappointing 16th in race two.

Swift Suzuki's American star Sean Hamblin is hot on Swanny's heels with a 12-8 card for eighth overall with Dixon Yamaha's young



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Tony Cairoli
MX2 World Championship

C'MON COPPINS!

Kiwi bites the bullet

While British fans go home on a high after Tommy Gun's dazzling debut overall GP victory, for many the weekend's tinged with sadness after Kiwi star – and adopted Brit – Josh Coppins is finally forced to surrender his MX1 points lead.

The Rinaldi Yamaha rider had led the series from the opening round at Valkenswaard in April and after round 10 in Faenza in July had stretched his advantage out to a huge 107 points over second-placed Steve Ramon. But then came the Czech GP at Loket!

After failing to score points in the opener after a stone jammed his rear brake pedal, Josh crashed out of race two and rebroke the same shoulder that put him out of the hunt for last year's title. Josh then sat out the following rounds at Namur and Moneyglass Demesne which allowed Ramon to close within 12 points going into the Donington GP.

Just three days before the race, the 30-year-old released an upbeat press statement that pointed towards a full recovery. "I rode the bike four times yesterday and apart from a bit of pain it went really well. I'm 100 per cent in terms of fitness and strength, just down on riding time. But in a way that is also a positive thing because I feel really fresh now."

But come race day and Josh's '100 per cent' is clearly either over-enthusiasm or – much more likely – part of a plan to kid his rivals pre-event and then hang on and hope for the best.

Josh holeshots the opener but immediately fades backwards through the pack to an eventual 14th-placed finish. He comes out for race two but lasts a lap before the pain forces him to retire.

"I was pretty happy with the first moto considering the pain I had. For the first 15 minutes I was quite good but then the pain settled in. My lines were not good as I was focused on the pain rather than on the riding.

"My family is here from NZ and I wanted to give 100 per cent for them and my fans and I couldn't and that is more frustrating than anything. I have worked so hard for this championship and not being able to fight for it is the worst thing of all."

So can Josh overturn the 14-point deficit to new series leader Ramon at the final round of the series in Lierop? And can either Kevin Strijbos or Sebastien Pourcel – both still in with a mathematical chance of the title – pull a season-ending shocker? You should know by now but if not all's revealed on pages 116-117...



Donington's not the best of days for Sebastien Pourcel...



...while Mike Brown helps himself to a handful of points both races

Northern Irish rider Martin Barr's inspired 10-12 card finally earning him a place in the top 10. But the weekend doesn't go so good for Barty's team-mates Carl Nunn and Carlos Campano.

Nunny starts the opener well but a lap one fall dumps him from seventh to 24th and he can only recover to 19th at the flag, one place behind the Spaniard. Race two sees the defending British champ get another good gate which he converts into a seventh-placed finish for 13th overall but mistakes cost Campano and he can only manage 18th.

The only other Brits to make the points are Molson Kawasaki's Tom Church who's 15th with 15-14 moto scores, ForkRent Suzuki rider Jason Dougan who recovers from a nightmare no-score opener to come home 13th in the second, Wulfsport Kawasaki's Shaun Simpson with a pair of 17th-placed finishes and Relentless Suzuki's Lewis Gregory who nicks a point second time out.

Brits Jamie Law, Alex Snow, Ray Rowson and Elliot Banks-Browne all fight their way into the points-paying races but can't convert starts into scoring rides.

Up in the MX1 division the big boys are left with some yolk on their chops thanks to everyone's favourite Sicilian – that's Antonio Cairoli, not a 12" super-hot special with extra green chillies from DBR's local pizzeria (although it's a close-run thing – yum, yum!). With the MX2 crown secured the previous weekend in Northern Ireland, Tony C trades his De Carli 250F for a full-on four-fiddy and sets about demonstrating exactly why he's the most exciting rider on the world MX circuit today.

With Cairoli stepping up, series leader Josh Coppins back from injury, Steve Ramon within striking distance of the red plate and Japanese GP winner Billy MacKenzie a possible podium topper, the premier class promises to provide a mighty, meaty MX feast – that's the racing, not a

12" pepperoni and spicy beef special with extra jalapenos from DBR's blah, blah, blah...

And the race one action's hotter than a wood oven-cooked calzone (okay, enough!) as Coppins gets the holeshot and then Billy Mac fires into the lead. For six sizzling laps the Scot stays at the front until a stall shunts him back down the field, handing the lead to Cairoli who looks totally at home with an extra 200cc between his legs. But Tony's got Kevin Strijbos on his case and the Belgian, who's got much more big-bike experience not to mention a bit extra brawn, only needs a couple of laps to find his way to the front.

After his great gate Coppins quickly goes backwards and is clearly bouncing off the pain barrier as he fights to keep his world title aspirations alive. The good news for Josh is that Ramon's had a stinker of a start – the bad news is that he's charging through the field and about the same time as Billy Mac kills his motor, ►

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KING DAVID IV

DT is extra terrestrial!

There are more than a few misty eyes among the, ahem, more seasoned MX fans as Dave Thorpe – world 500cc champ in '85, '86 and '89 – grabs his fourth world crown, this time in the new FIM Senior division.

"Fantastic!" grins Dave after going 2-1 to take the title on a CRF450. "I loved it, every minute of it. It was like old times and at 44 you don't expect that." There are lots of fans who'll second that sentiment DT!

The two-round Veterans World Cup series kicked off last month at Namur where Dave went 2-1 to snatch the Seniors overall – for riders aged between 40 and 50 – by two points from Belgian Jan Blancquaert. Saturday's Donington moto sees Jan pull a one-point gap with a half-second win from the Berkshire Bomber before DT fires back in Sunday's moto to win by over four seconds from Dutchman Toine van Dijk and Blancquaert.

A few years ago Dave was a regular on the South West scene but more recently his riding's been restricted to just his MX schools. "I still ride but I never do laps, never, just the odd corner when I'm teaching. It was tough today. The track was fantastic and the big boys make it look easy but it most certainly wasn't – not for me anyway."

So will Dave be back to defend his title in '08? It appears the jury's still out on that. "We'll talk about it, have a board meeting and make a decision over the winter. I just want to enjoy today first."

Next best Brit is four-stroke ace Perry Leask who ends the weekend sixth overall for sixth in the championship with Alan Eaves taking 12th overall at Donington for 14th in the championship.

In the Veteran class for riders between 51 and 60, Kiwi Tony Cooksley carries his perfect score from Namur over to clinch the title with an unbeaten record ahead of France's Paul Barbara and Belgian Philippe Dejong. Best Brit in the series is twinshock Maico-mounted Peter Lightfoot in 16th although bragging rights at Donington go to Alan Deer.

The biggest disappointment for MX fans with long memories is the DNS by US legend and former AMA 500cc champ Charles 'Chuck' Sun who was refused a ride because he's 50 and therefore didn't qualify for either category. Bonkers! Also bonkers – according to Suttly at least – was the refusal of Greg Hanson's entry on DBR's KXF450 Magazine Machine. Boo hiss...

There's never a dull moment when Billy Mac's about



Steve gets ahead of Rinaldi Yamaha's #1 man. Stribos takes a comfortable win with Cairoli a safe second but there's plenty of overtaking for the final step on the podium as CAS Honda pairing Mike Brown and Ken De Dycker, factory Kawasaki rider Tanel Leok and Red Bull KTM's David Philippaerts go at it. At the flag it's 'Arry Ainsworth's big Belgian who has the advantage over 'Arry Ainsworth's battler Brown with Leok coming home fifth ahead of Ramon who's now just four puny points away from the championship lead.

Billy Mac crosses the line eighth behind Seb Pourcel with Multitek Honda's James Noble the next best Brit in 12th, two places ahead of Coppins. Wildcards Brad Anderson aboard the Pioneer Yamaha and PAR Homes Honda's

Wayne Smith snatch the last two points in 19th and 20th.

Josh is back out for the final moto but he can't repeat his race one start and lasts just a lap before he's out as Cairoli leads from Jonathan Barragan until Ramon moves into second on lap two. Ramon's also carrying an injury – he's got, according to the Suzuki PO, a 'partly' broken scaphoid – but it's clearly nowhere near as severe as Coppins' crocked bits although bad enough for him to slip back to fourth by the end.

De Dycker's also right up there and at one stage is running second before the distractions of a flapping boot seem to knock him out of his stride and allow Stribos past with four laps left with Leok finishing fifth ahead of Brown.

Nev Bradshaw misses out on the points



As for Billy Mac, well, he has a race he'd rather forget. A stall at the start followed by an early crash leave him right at the back and although he grits his teeth and gets on with the job, his final finishing position of 16th is hugely disappointing for him and his fans.

With Billy struggling it's left to Noble to uphold home honour and another 12th is good enough for 10th overall – and should also be good enough to guarantee him a place in our MXdN team ahead of Anderson, the only other British race two points-scorer in 14th.



For more of Suttly's super-sharp shots from Donington Park check out the gallery at www.dirtbikerider.com

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5	Mike Brown	(CAS Honda)	18+15=33
6	Tanel Leok	(KRT Kawasaki)	16+16=32
7	Sebastien Pourcel	(GPKR Kawasaki)	14+13=27
8	Jonathan Barragan	(Red Bull KTM)	11+12=23
9	Julien Bill	(Martin Honda)	12+11=23
10	James Noble	(Multitek Honda)	9+9=18
12	Billy MacKenzie	(KRT Kawasaki)	13+5=18
17	Brad Anderson	(Pioneer Yamaha)	2+7=9
23	Wayne Smith	(PAR Homes Honda)	1+0=1

MX2

1	Tommy Searle	(Red Bull KTM)	22+25=47
2	Jeremy Tarroux	(Silver Action KTM)	20+22=44
3	Nicolas Aubin	(Ricci Yamaha)	25+16=41
4	Matteo Bonini	(De Carli Yamaha)	14+20=34
5	Dennis Verbruggen	(Van Beers Yamaha)	10+18=28
6	Matti Seistola	(SRS Honda)	15+12=27
7	Gareth Swanepoel	(Molson Kawasaki)	18+5=23
8	Sean Hamblin	(Swift Suzuki)	9+13=22
9	Manuel Monni	(3C Yamaha)	12+10=22
10	Martin Barr	(Bike It/Dixon Yamaha)	11+9=20
13	Carl Nunn	(Bike It/Dixon Yamaha)	2+14=16
15	Tom Church	(Molson Kawasaki)	6+7=13
19	Jason Dougan	(ForkRent Suzuki)	0+8=8
20	Shaun Simpson	(Wulfsport Kawasaki)	4+4=8
21	Carlos Campano	(Bike It/Dixon Yamaha)	3+3=6
22	Lewis Gregory	(Relentless Suzuki)	0+1=1



THE ANTONIO SHOW

Why everyone loves Cairoli

MX1 winner – and MX2 world champ – Antonio Cairoli has got to be the most exciting rider in the world at the moment, combining devastating speed with his hang-it-out style.

Okay, so his English-speaking talents don't quite match up to his two-wheel talents but at the post-race press conference the Italian still gets his point across.

Over to you Tony...

"I'm very happy for sure but I cannot expect to win because I have just 20 minutes training with the 450 bike. This track with many bumps and many lines it's hard for me. I don't have the feeling with speed in the corner and in timed practice I don't have the speed enough but I know in the race it's different.

"First moto I wait a little bit because Josh is in front of me and I cannot pass him because he's fast in the beginning and after when I pass I have a little bit arm-pump because usually I don't ride in this class. And then Kevin passed me and he's more fast than me in the first moto and I was a little bit problem with the goggles because I was so sweaty and I finish second.

"At the moment I have very good condition. I just drive smooth second moto and don't use so much energy in the first part of the race and when Kevin come back to me I just push a little bit and it's enough for the win."

And how does the 450 compare to his usual mount? "There's not a big difference, it's just the power. At the moment I don't like so much the 450 and is too strong for me physically and I think for a race it's okay but for all the season it's different. I prefer my 250 bike and in Lierop I will come back in MX2. It's the hardest race of the season and I don't have the condition to ride two motos."



Steve Dixon's Spanish star-in-the-making Carlos Campano

THE FUTURE

Is Donington on track?

The British GP is the first event at the Donington Park road race venue on a custom-built track in the Tarmac circuit's infield.

Spectacular it most certainly is and intelligent design ensures there's no danger of it becoming a one-line Scalextric affair but what do the overall winners reckon of the track that looks likely to be the home of the British GP for at least the next few years?

It gets the nod of approval from Cairoli (whose English is much better than my Italian). "The track was really good and with the 250 it's more fun to ride because with the big bike many jumps and normally I scrub everywhere but with the 450 it's hard because it's more heavy."

Tommy Gun also gives it the thumbs up although, reading between the lines, he reckons there's room for improvement. "It's a nice track and good fun for the crowd and everyone. Because it's the first race I bet we can make some changes and it will be perfect."

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Colours: Black, Blue, Red, Green, Orange, Purple

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Adult Sizes: S-XXL

Colours: Black, Blue, Red, White/Black

£24.99 part#: 03111



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Adult Sizes: S,M,L,XL,XXL

Colours: Black, Blue, Red, Green, Yellow, Camo

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Kids Sizes: KS-KL (Black, Blue, Red)

£21.99 part#: 02048



2008 SHIFT STRIKE PANT

Adult Sizes: 28"-40"

Colours: Black, Blue, Red, Green, Yellow, Camo

£79.99 part#: 04026

Kids Sizes: 24"-28" (Black, Blue, Red)

£59.99 part#: 04015



2008 SHIFT STRIKE GLOVE

Adult Sizes: S-XXL

Colours: Black, Blue, Red, Green, White

£17.99 part#: 03126

Kids Sizes: KS-KL (Black, Blue, Red)

£14.99 part#: 03117



2008 SHIFT ASSAULT JERSEY

Adult Sizes: S,M,L,XL,XXL (XXXL,XXXXL Black Only)

Colours: Black, Blue, Red, Black/Grey, White/Red, Fatigue Green

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Kids Sizes: KS-KL (Black, Red, Orange, Black/Grey, Fatigue Green)

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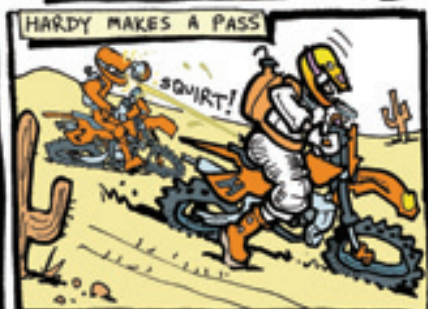
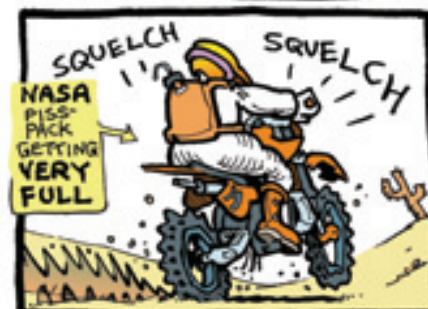
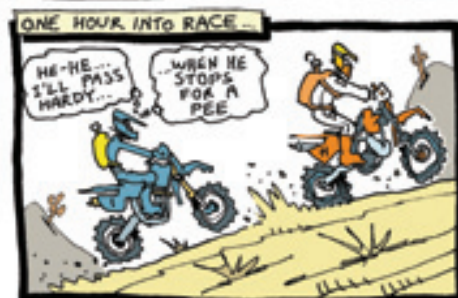
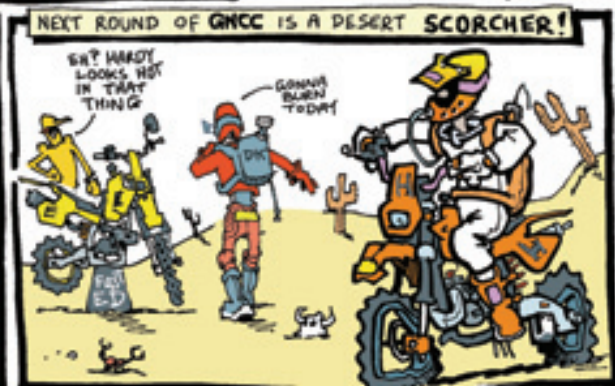


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KX125

KX250

KX250F

KX450F



GREEN DREAMS!

Our two Lilliputian testers travel to Tonyoto to sample – or in Tony's case 'check' out – the 2008 Kawasaki motocross range...

Words by Tony Marshall and Chris Hammal Photos by Jonny Edmunds

KAWASAKI CLAIM that their 2008 KXFs are closer to being factory racers than ever before and if looks are anything to go by then they might just be right. The first thing that screams out about these dirt scoots is the colour – lime green is the go here and these bikes sure do shimmer like kryptonite.

Working hand in hand with the green scheme to keep things looking mean are a black seat cover, colour co-ordinated number plates – black for the 250, white for the 450 – and black rims, hubs and triple clamps. Trick.

Improvements aren't just limited to the cosmetic side of things either. The 250F gets a good number of tweaks and tickles, some of which are passed down directly from Kawasaki's GP stars.





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Want awesome traction?
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the doctor ordered...

bike test



SPECIFICATIONS

KX250F

Capacity:	249cc
Bore and stroke:	77mm x 53.6mm
Transmission:	Five-speed
Carburettor:	Keihin FCR37
Front suspension:	Kayaba USD (315mm travel)
Rear suspension:	Kayaba (310mm travel)
Front brake:	250mm disc
Rear brake:	240mm disc
Wheelbase:	1469mm
Seat height:	955mm
Dry weight:	92.5kg

With the number of shifter problems Tom Church has had this season it's little surprise that the KXF's gear lever has been chopped in for a new 'un. Three degrees higher and hopefully much tougher, the new shifter should help minimise missed shifts and last a little longer than the one found on this year's bike.

The lower end of the motor has come in for a little work too. Both the right and left side crankcases have increased rigidity which not only increases reliability but also makes for less mechanical loss which means more torque is transmitted to the rear wheel.

A revised silencer helps keep things quiet – that's 94db quiet. Yeah, it's slightly bigger and a touch heavier but power loss is promised to be minimised. A new stronger mounting bracket should keep the silencer stuck to your subframe for longer although to be fair we never heard of anyone suffering a breakage here on their '07 bike.

A small amount of chassis and suspension work completes the thumper package. Aside from the all-new Kashima coating there's nothing too flamboyant, just plenty of small tweaks and tickles working together to make the overall package better.

The 450F which has proved to be a solid performer in '07 is only slightly revised for 2008. Inside the motor a new crank is said to lessen engine vibration and increase grunt at low RPMs while delivering smoother, more linear power through the range. Smoother intake ports increase intake efficiency at all engine speeds.

The five-speed box has also come in for a tweaking with a revised shifter cam shape, smoother track and differing spring rates ensuring the larger KXF's shifting should be utterly buttery.



Finally chassis tweaks and new suspension clicker and shim settings, the Kashima coating and tighter tolerance engineering should all add up to a much sweeter handling package.

Disappointingly for '08 the two-strokes are nothing more than re-graphic'd '07s which aside from some small cosmetic changes – the hubs and clamps were coloured brown – are in fact re-graphic'd zero-sixers. It's more a sign of the times rather than laziness on Kawasaki's behalf although with the amount of two-strokes making



SPECIFICATIONS

KX125

Capacity:	124cc
Bore and stroke:	54mm x 54.5mm
Transmission:	Six-speed
Carburettor:	Mikuni TMX38X
Front suspension:	Kayaba 48mm USD (300mm travel)
Rear suspension:	Kayaba (310mm travel)
Front brake:	250mm disc
Rear brake:	240mm disc
Wheelbase:	1470mm
Seat height:	945mm
Dry weight:	87kg

it back out onto UK tracks – and not just at the DEP – how long will it be before the manufacturers realise it's time to stoke up the fire on the oil-burners once more?

With a freshly built track and four bikes ready to rip up I figured it was time to get my arse in gear and check the 2008 Kawasakis out...

There's only one thing I can say about the KX250F and that's what a bike! I felt at home on this green machine within a few turns and the more I ride it the more I love it. This bike has

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DIRTBIKE



Lil Chrissy just loves these poppers!

I love this time of year with all the new bikes out looking shiny and sounding sweet. This is when you realise just how hanging your own pride and joy looks...

With all the success that Kawasaki has had with Stewart, Villopoto and Townley winning titles they must be doing something right. I have a few mates that have a fetish for the green machines, they won't own anything else and I think that if they had to they would choose to take their bike to bed over any woman – freaks! With this in mind I was curious to ride a Kawi for myself to see what I'm missing.

First off I got my little mitts on the 125. Now Kawasaki claim that they haven't forgotten about the two-stroke range and still feel that there's a market for them but when you look at them next to the four-poppers you can see where their money has gone.

In my opinion the two-strokes look a little dated which is a shame because when out on the track the 125 feels great. There's nice smooth power delivery all the way through and there is enough top-end for it to be a competitive bike as long as you are racing other 125s. Obviously you have to be in the right gear and at times give it a bit of clutch work to move it out of corners but that's something you get right with more saddle time.

The riding position is very comfy – everything feels like it's in the right place making a bike that gives you confidence. The suspension is on the rigid side over small bumps but still doesn't step out or dance about. On bigger, harder hitting stuff it soaked everything up well. This is a great 125 – it's a fun bike to ride and in its own class it's a great bike.

Keeping with the smoker theme, next up is the 250 two-stroke. It has the same styling as the 125 and when you sit on it, it feels a lot like it too – which is not a bad thing. The whole range comes with Renthal handlebars – but not Twinwalls like on some other brands which was a little disappointing. On a good note the clutch feels really light and comes with an on-the-fly adjuster.

Out on the track the two-fiddy feels great. The motor is smooth but powerful making the bike very easy to ride. There are no problems with the handling – it doesn't dance about at all making me feel confident enough to want to ride it even harder. The suspension is better on the 250, maybe because of the slightly heavier bike but it has a more plush feel and doesn't kick back so hard. Like the 125 this is a great bike for its class – it's just a shame it's starting to look a bit dated.

The 250F is one sweet looking bike – you can see where Kawasaki have put all their effort. It looks super tricked up as standard coming with petal shaped brake discs, black rims laced to cool brown factory style hubs, anodised triple clamps, stepped titanium exhaust, works style graphics and the number plates are black which all add up to one awesome looking standard bike.

Out on the track this bike doesn't disappoint either. It has so plenty of bark and sounds and goes great. For '08 Kawasaki have found a way to transmit more torque to the rear wheel and this gives you snap off the bottom that then pulls hard until you hit the rev-limiter.

In the corners the bike turns tight and feels balanced. The suspension is good, it tracks in a straight line over braking bumps and while it feels heavier than the 125 you can still throw it around and have fun with it. This is a great bike – it looks great, rides great and I would happily go down to my local dealer and spend my hard-earned cash on one (if the wife would let me).

Like its little brother the 250F, the 450F looks great. Out on the track this is one powerful and fast bike – it's got so much grunt all you have to do is coast around the corners and nail it to the next and you'll be putting in good lap times.

It's not that easy to throw about and feels on the heavy side but it's still a great bike. It corners well – even in the tight ones – and the suspension is good, it feels like it had a bit more give to it than the 250F soaking up a little more. This is another great bike, it looks great but I personally still prefer the 250F.



KX450F
Chris reckons the KX450F's got more grunt than a pig farm

it all. It handles well, it's easy to ride with loads of power – strong power too and I'm talking everywhere.

The track here is pebbly and you have to treat it with respect but the 250F is still a pleasure to ride – just roll the power on and you can find

awesome traction thanks to all that controllable power. There are no flat spots or bogging at any time – even when sometimes I'm in a bit too high a gear. Top-end power is impressive although the supercrossy nature of this track means I don't get to test it all.

The bike handles well. High-speed straight-line stability is excellent and in the tightest of corners this bike behaves well too. The riding position is really comfortable, in my racing days I used to prefer a hard seat but this was not the case on the KXF where I like the soft seat



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The quarter-litre Kawasaki is one of the more user-friendly two-strokes on the market



SPECIFICATIONS

KX250

KX250

Capacity:	249cc
Bore and stroke:	66.4mm x 72mm
Transmission:	Five-speed
Carburettor:	Keihin PWK38S
Front suspension:	Kayaba USD (300mm travel)
Rear suspension:	Kayaba (310mm travel)
Front brake:	250mm disc
Rear brake:	240mm disc
Wheelbase:	1480mm
Seat height:	965mm
Dry weight:	97kg

that feels like I'm sitting in it rather than on it. Maybe this is to do with me getting lazier in my old age and I just need to sit down more.

The gearbox doesn't seem to change as smoothly as I would have expected – especially second to third is not always clean. Coming down the gearbox feels notchy too.

The gearbox on the 450 seems a lot smoother than on the 250F and powershifting comes easy as the gears hook in and out very smoothly.

The torque this motor produces is incredible but I could not get a good feeling for the power delivery. The motor pulls high gears very well and finds lots of traction but I just don't want to be going that fast – this bike just wants to hook up and go and it gets there fast.

Initially I kept missing my turning points going into the turns. The higher the gear I pull the less engine brake I get and I rely on that to help slow me down and get me into the turn. When I do get it into the turns properly the balance of the bike helps you just flow through them and you rarely find the bike wanting to sit up halfway through.

It's not just in turns where this bike feels balanced and generally the front and rear suspension works together in a healthy partnership. The front end is stable and makes me feel like I can't do a thing wrong.

The rear shock feels spot on – it works really well and handles like a dream. Coming into the turns I never felt the rear move sideways or kick me about under braking and the jetting on both bikes is sweet as a nut so no complaints there.

The two-strokes haven't changed from this year but it's surprising how different they feel on this track compared to the test last year. The 125 motor runs a bit fluffy off the bottom – a quick



SPECIFICATIONS

KX450F

KX450F

Capacity:	449cc
Bore and stroke:	96mm x 62.1mm
Transmission:	Five-speed
Carburettor:	Keihin FCR40
Front suspension:	Kayaba USD (315mm travel)
Rear suspension:	Kayaba (315mm travel)
Front brake:	250mm disc
Rear brake:	240mm disc
Wheelbase:	1485mm
Seat height:	965mm
Dry weight:	99.8kg

change of pilot jet will fix that. But even with the bad jetting the 125 still hits strong coming out of turns and sure is a lot of fun to ride – I can certainly see why the DEP Challenge has become so popular.

The suspension isn't great and I find the front wanders in turns and even along the straights. The bike isn't well balanced and feels front heavy, I think this is because the front forks are

too soft in the initial part of their stroke making the rear sit high.

The 250 two-stroke suspension is much better and when I over-jumped the rear and front forks just soaked up the hard landings. I think that the KX250 is one of the easiest 250 two-strokes to ride on the market and doesn't deliver silly aggressive power like most – it just has great useable power.

CRUSTYS ARE COMING!



No, we're not talking a load of dreadlocked, tree-hugging, tunnel-digging eco warriors - we're talking the **addest, craziest, bad-ass bunch of freestylers on the planet...**



OVER THE last 12 years they've build a worldwide fanbase of adrenalin junkies that have helped make them the stars of the most popular action sports DVD series of all time – and now the Crusty Demons are coming to the UK!

The Crusty Demons live shows were created back in 2003 and were a hit from day one. Almost \$100 million in ticket sales have been generated in the USA, Australia, New Zealand and India in that time making it one of the most successful action sports touring acts ever to visit these countries.

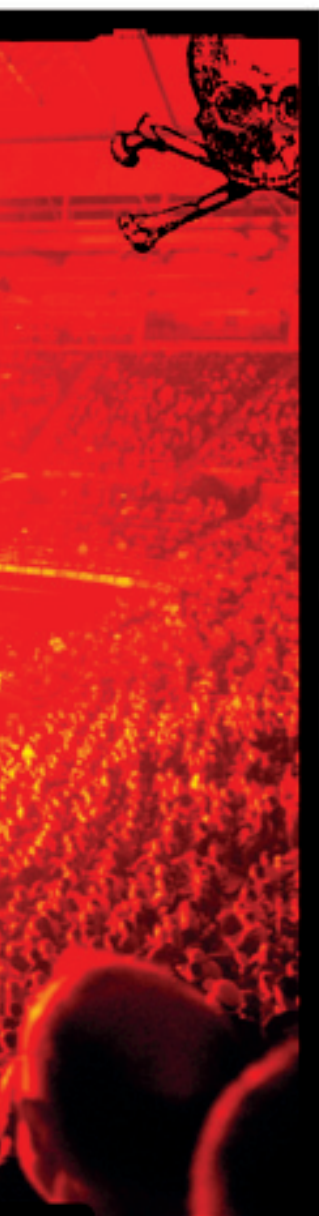
And British freestyle fans will be able to see their heroes in the flesh – and maybe even bits of their heroes' flesh – when The Crusty Demons Unleash Hell Tour rocks up on these shores as part of its long awaited inaugural tour of Europe with 10 shows planned for the UK in January 2008.

The Crusty Demons live show is a three-hour, fully choreographed entertainment spectacular featuring the world's greatest freestyle motocross riders performing the sickest, most death-defying stunts on the planet including the insane backflip combo tricks performed by all the Crusty riders.

World #1 Nate Adams heads the all-star cast which boasts seven of the top 10 riders in the world including 2007 X-Games gold medalist Adam Jones, Jim McNeil and Mike Mason, all direct from the USA. Australia's world #3 Blake 'Bilko' Williams will be joined by fellow Aussies Robbie Maddison, Steve Mini, Joel Balchin and Cam Sinclair.

The Crustys will also unleash Alaska's Jimmy Blaze – the only man in the world who can backflip a 350kg snow mobile over a 60ft gap while 50 feet in the air – as well as Californian quad freestyler Jon Guetter who flips his four-wheeler over a world record 75ft. Both these stunts have never been seen before in Europe.

In the last three years the backflip and all its variations has become





UNLEASH HELL TOUR

Crusty crucial info



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the must-have trick in any self-respecting FMXer's arsenal. So it's no surprise that well over 50 backflips will be pulled at the Crusty shows including pants-soiling backflip combination tricks where not content with merely being upside down, riders bust a different freestyle trick for good measure!

Some of the flip combos Crusty fans will see include the nac flip, the side saddle lander flip, heelclicker flip, cordova flip, lazy boy flip, the 360 and the incredible ruler flip where the rider hangs completely straight down from the bike in the middle of a flip. And Bilko, an Aussie X-Games medalist, will also perform the world's only three-part backflip combo – that's three

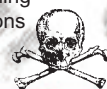
separate freestyle tricks during a backflip! It's the kinda stuff Peter Andre would call "insania"!

All of these tricks have never been seen before in the UK so Crusty fans can expect total carnage on the Crusty tour! Expect to see minibike madness, freaks, stunts, the stunning Crusty dancing babes along with a pyro, lights and sound show that will simply blow fans' minds.

Tour promoter Mike Porra can't wait for it all to kick off. "We are absolutely pumped to be coming to Europe. This tour has been in planning for over two years and now we are set. It will be the first time all of our riders have performed in the UK and to assemble the world's greatest riders to come and throw down their best in one place at one time will simply be insane.

"The show's are suitable for all ages and sex, there's only one pre-requisite...be prepared to scream, pump the air and jump up and down for two hours and not be able to sleep when you get home!"

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KTM

THRILLED 125 WINNER
BOB HANNAH,
BESIEGED BY FANS

Back to Budds!

It's been 10 years since Budds Creek hosted a 250 GP and now Europe's best are heading back to take on the Yanks as the MXdN - for only the second time in its history - kicks off Stateside...

Words and photos by Jack Burnicle

7.45am, SEPTEMBER
13th, 1987 - TIME FOR
A NORTH AMERICAN
BREAKFAST!



VITAL MOMENT IN
RACE TWO AS 125
HEROES HANNAH (LEFT)
+ BAYLE (RIGHT) PASS
FALLEN CAGIVA OF
LEADER DAVE STRIJBOS



BUDDS CREEK became a US 250GP venue 10 years ago and later this month Europe's best are back for the 61st MX des Nations, 20 years after the first and only time the World Cup of Motocross previously visited American shores.

That was 1987 and the location was also on America's Eastern seaboard. Budds Creek Motocross Park, Maryland, lies 60 miles south of Washington DC while the scene of that inaugural Stateside epic – Unadilla Valley Sports Center, New York State – lies 220 miles north of New York City.

I flew to Newark airport, spent a couple of steamy days with friends in Manhattan, hired a geeky little Renault Valiant and – desperately early on Saturday morning, September 12th – lurched northwards out of New York City alongside the Hudson River. Up the Palisades Freeway to Turnpike 87 and eventually north west on Highway 17 through the rolling wooded countryside of the Catskills, past Liberty, Roscoe and Hancock to Oquada Lake before hanging a right and heading north into Chenango County.

My hangover had almost abated by the time I signed on in New Berlin and joined my huge friend Bruce Hollingshead for a vast, angina-inducing American breakfast. The sumptuous, loamy circuit looked as challenging as ever, draped around the valley of the Unadilla River, ready to take on all-comers. Only a lousy local weather forecast threatened to douse the spirits of promoter Ward Robinson who, with wife Peg, had worked 15 years to stage this dream event.

Belgium, Britain and the Netherlands were the only likely challengers to the USA who had reigned supreme for six seasons. The home team had taken a shock decision to overlook reigning 125 national champion Micky Dymond in favour of the popular peoples' choice, Suzuki veteran Bob 'Hurricane' Hannah. Bob, a week short of his 31st birthday and

racing a 125 for the first time in 10 years, joined Jeff Ward (500 Kawasaki) and Ricky Johnson (250 Honda).

Belgium fielded newly crowned Honda world champions Georges Jobe (500) and Eric Geboers (250) with 125 Honda rider Marc Velkeneers. The British trio – all, like Jobe and Geboers, first-timers at this unique natural amphitheatre – were Rob Herring (250 Yamaha) and Team Green's Kurt Nicoll (500) and Greg Hanson (125).

The evening drew quickly dark and by morning everyone's worst fears were realised. Heavy rain poured down the Unadilla Valley. I splashed along Highway 12 from our motel in Norwich in the wake of the Sukup and Strattman brothers Bill, Tom, Tom and Dan from Indianapolis. It was 7.45am and barely light.

Ossie's 24-hour restaurant was ablaze with neon

and packed with noisy eaters so we countered the onset of meteorological depression with another mega breakfast, this time embellished with hot oatmeal and 'English muffins'.

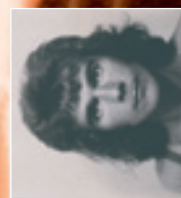
Several mugs of coffee later the rain still lashed down. We headed reluctantly for the track. Tom Strattman didn't waste any time soaking up the soggy views and got pinched twice inside 12 miles, for speeding and crossing a double yellow line (in the middle of the road, not the kerb!).

Brave riders were already squelching round the track on foot. I bumped into a disgruntled Ward Robinson. "Three weeks ago this place was all dust," growled the big man. "I spent 3000 dollars putting calcium down on the pit roads and I've been watering the track every day since!"

Fortunately, both riders and fans – who were gathering in enormous numbers – felt better about the day's prospects than the disenchanted promoter. And they weren't disappointed. A stupendous battle for first-race supremacy sparked a continuous roar that echoed around the dark, moody valley alongside an aggressive Jeff Ward as he scrapped with super-smooth Dutchman Kees van der Ven (500 KTM) and eventual race winner Jobe.

A separate din accompanied 'Buckwheat' Hannah as, after gating behind Davey Strijbos (125 Cagiva) and skinny French phenomenon Jean-Michel Bayle (125 Honda), Bob took four attempts to scale 'Screw U', the last steep climb out of 'The Swamp'. Only 15th at half-distance, Hannah staged a mercurial, mud-plastered comeback to nail ninth overall and fourth 125 behind Bayle, Strijbos and Velkeneers. But Great Britain was already out of contention. Nicoll's Kawasaki seized and Hanson crashed twice on the first lap before recovering to 16th and ninth 125.

With Jeff Ward unable to hold Jobe and van der Ven the



was armed with his mum's Kodak Brownie camera. After art college he mixed life as a graphic designer, magazine art director, photographer and part-time art college tutor with motocross and photo-journalism. Now he's a commentator, painting pictures with words. He never did get a proper job...

JACK BURNICLE is the godfather (our words, not his) of British MX journalism. Born in Billingham, County Durham, to Bella and nutty (his words, not ours) musical genius Stan Burnicle, Jack was mad about cars and motor racing as a kid. At sweet 16 he got a motorbike, rode it to a local 'scramble' and was instantly, hopelessly hooked. Next time he went he

DESCRIPTION SIGN ELEMENT	
Gender	Male
Marital Status	Single
Profession	Graphic Designer
Place of Birth	Unadilla Valley
Date of Birth	9/12/47
Signature of Person	<i>Jack Burnicle</i>
Signature of Wife	



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RICKY JOHNSON
SCYTHES TO A THIRD
MOTO VICTORY + CLINCHED
A SEVENTH SUCCESSIVE
MX DES FUR THE STATES



crowd fell uneasily silent. Events were not adhering to the script. Belgium and Holland emerged joint leaders with the USA languishing in third. But the States still held onto their trump card...

Rick 'Too Hip' Johnson was quite possibly the best motocross racer in the world. RJ stormed to the front and, despite a tenacious pursuit by Geboers, forcefully revived American prospects with superb support from Hannah who finished a stunning third overall and first 125 ahead of JM Bayle. Italian Corrado Maddii, Velkeneers and Finn Arto Pantilla (KTM) – all amazingly 125-mounted – filled the next three places ahead of 250cc opposition.

Even Ricky's rousing reception paled beside the uproar that greeted Hannah. Fans engulfed their aging hero and drowned out Bob and his equally excited old foe 'Jammin' Jimmy Weinert as they hollered into a mic on the finishing line. When the clamour finally died down, a relieved shout of "everything's all right now" embodied their restored belief in the US team's rightful destiny!

Poor Bayle had stopped early for fresh goggles and was disqualified for receiving outside assistance, a fact that commentator Larry Maiers bellowed on about at interminable length to reinforce the spectators' view of Europeans as a bunch of anonymous cheats. Rob Herring, sidelined with his team's second engine seizure, expressed amazement at Larry's bare-faced bias!

MB's misfortune hoisted Marc Velkeneers up to third 125 and kept Belgium level on points with the USA. And though Holland crucially lost Strijbos after he fell and snapped off his Cagiva's clutch lever when leading Hannah and Bayle, John van den Berk's third-placed 250 ride kept the Dutch well in contention with only a team's best four out of six results to count.

A long delay heightened the already tangible tension in the parc ferme before the third and



MUD-PLASTERED JEFF
WARD (500 KAWASAKI)
SUFFERS IN THE FIRST-
RALE ROOST OF GEORGES
JOBE AND KEEL VAN DER
VEN

deciding moto was holeshot by ultimate 'King of Cool' Kees van der Ven ahead of Nicoll, Johnson, Geboers and Ward.

But Jobe floundered badly in midfield, got seriously filled in before turn two, fought valiantly back to within two places of Ward by turn six, then picked up trackside tape round the Honda's rear wheel hub. A halt to cut away the offending plastic left him second last in front of hapless faller Herring but with no back brake his race – and Belgium's – was sadly run.

Johnson once more took control while van der Ven upheld European prestige by winning a deadly duel with Ward to take victory in the 500 class. Geboers fell again and finished a detuned sixth, Nicoll passed van den Berk to nick a consolation fourth spot and the

Netherlands lost out on overall honours by just two points to the host nation.

At a cheerful Sunday evening presentation ceremony, Buckwheat chided the happy Dutch runners-up. "They shoulda been disqualified," heckled Hannah. "Two of their guys are too young!" Third-placed Belgians Geboers, Jobe and Velkeneers enjoyed the banter as the Americans celebrated another fine win, their seventh straight glorious year.

Later the two Toms – Sukup and Strattman – and I indulged in our own damp celebration by downing a McDonalds in Norwich.

At eight o'clock the following morning I stepped out on to the motel veranda. Chenango County lay bathed in a warm, mellow yellow mist. It was a beautiful day!



RIPPERS FOR NIPPERS!

Godfrey puts down the Rich Teas just long enough to take an in-depth look at one of the most popular bikes on the schoolie scene today...

THE KTM 65 is one of the most popular bikes in our sport and the sheer number of little orange rippers racing around the tracks of the UK speaks volumes for both their popularity and reliability. As we all know if a bike doesn't measure up to standards it will be verbally trashed by schoolie parents and remain doomed until it's well sorted out.

After years of Kawasaki dominance the KTM seems to be doing the trick on the 65cc scene at the moment so I thought it was time to take a little look at this puppy to see what it is that makes this little bike so popular.

KTM's early attempts with a 65 weren't the

best so they went back to the drawing board for their 2003 bike and came up with the base model which is still out there now – with minor tweaking as each year goes by. KTM went for a scaled down version of the big bikes and this seems to be one of the keys to its popularity to date. Motocross relies on style and this mini has plenty.

The bike in the pictures belongs to the 'Ferris Crew' and is a classic example of one of these little bikes. The aftermarket parts available to 'hop up' this ride are plentiful and pimping your ride is part of the fun for their owners. Parts seem to be readily available with

dealers stocking the very finest stuff and the legendary e-Bay a must for parts of all colours if you're looking for a deal.

Like all bikes, OEM parts are available but with this bike's popularity there seems to be more and more hop-up parts available second-hand making owning trickness pretty reachable for families with budding champs.

There are, of course, plus and minus points on every bike as perfection is always difficult to achieve and the little Toomer is no different. Technically the bike has become stronger over the years and proved to be reliable in most departments.

**Wakker gives the little KTM
the ultimate Godfrey accolade
– a double thumbs-up –**

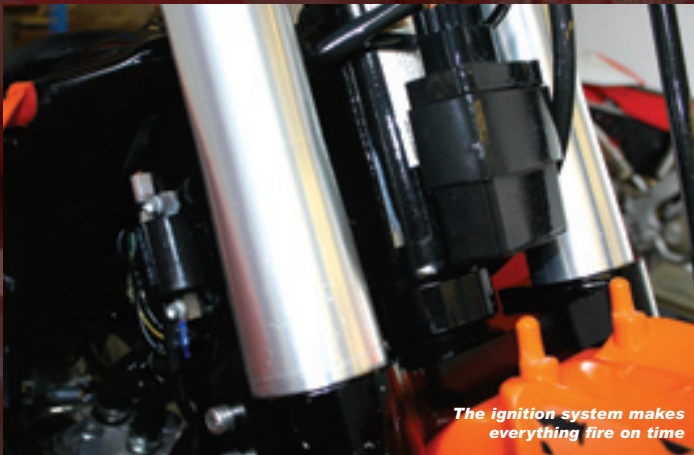




Steel braided hose makes for front brake power



Hydraulic clutch helps reduce maintenance



The ignition system makes everything fire on time



A single nine-fin radiator keeps things nice and cool

THE GOOD...

The Marzocchi forks are simple and work well as stock. The units are also easily upgraded as they don't come with any available adjustment as standard. Aftermarket internals are available which provide compression and rebound adjustment for easy setting of the forks.

The WP PDS rear shock comes standard with compression and rebound adjustment and is a fully serviceable unit.

The hydraulic clutch makes for an easy and consistent action for kids as the pull is pretty easy. With the clutch being hydraulic the freeplay doesn't need adjusting all the time making for an easier day for inexperienced dads at the race track.

A removable subframe in the guise of its big brothers makes general maintenance easier as the subframe can be removed completely after a muddy meeting for washing. It also makes it easier to reach every part of the bike so it can be cleaned and inspected thoroughly.

Styling. It's all about style, right? I have to say the bike is one cool looking little puppy. The clean lines and narrow overall width of the bike make it a very racy bike for the kids. KTM have been clever as the footpeg mounts are the same dimensions as the big bikes' so the kids get some man-size footpeg action to give them a positive platform.

The cooling system copes very well with keeping the little screamer

running sweet thanks to its single nine-fin radiator. These radiators are built strong and they work well with good flow system through the motor and around the cylinder's water jacket.

The motor suffered with a few problems in the early years with a crank balance problem but the last couple of years have benefited from an upgraded crank which cuts down a lot of the vibration from the motor to the rider.

The standard motor is fast enough for most riders and makes good power through the range breathing through the stock exhaust system. The faster riders will always go for a level of tuning on the motor as it is pretty easy to extract some stronger power from the engine. Aftermarket exhaust systems are available and allow the motor to really stretch its legs.

The stock reeds are good although there are reed valves available that are stronger and increase power. Jetting is consistent even with engine modifications. Air filter changing requires no tools.

The ignition system keeps everything firing on time and there are very few reported failings. The front brake uses a steel braided hose for power.

Comfort. The kids find the seating position comfortable for riding as different clamps and handlebars are readily available to suit every shape and size of pilot.

MAINTENANCE AND ADJUSTMENT 95

Part Name	N.m	kgf.m
(Front) Fork Spring	20	2.0
(Front) Fork Oil Seal	21	2.1
(Rear) Shock Spring	22	2.2
(Rear) Shock Oil Seal	23	2.3
(Rear) Shock Piston	24	2.4
(Rear) Shock Rod	25	2.5
Swingarm Pivot Shaft Nut	26	2.6
Handlebar Clamp Bolts	27	2.7
Seat Mounting Bolts	28	2.8
Footpeg Mounting Bolts	29	2.9
Engine Mounting Bolts	30	3.0
Exhaust Mounting Bolts	31	3.1
Clutch Cable Adjuster	32	3.2
Brake Cable Adjuster	33	3.3
Ignition Switch Bolt	34	3.4
Headlight Mounting Bolts	35	3.5
License Plate Mounting Bolts	36	3.6
Seat Mounting Bolts	37	3.7
Footpeg Mounting Bolts	38	3.8
Engine Mounting Bolts	39	3.9
Exhaust Mounting Bolts	40	4.0
Clutch Cable Adjuster	41	4.1
Brake Cable Adjuster	42	4.2
Ignition Switch Bolt	43	4.3
Headlight Mounting Bolts	44	4.4
License Plate Mounting Bolts	45	4.5
Seat Mounting Bolts	46	4.6
Footpeg Mounting Bolts	47	4.7
Engine Mounting Bolts	48	4.8
Exhaust Mounting Bolts	49	4.9
Clutch Cable Adjuster	50	5.0
Brake Cable Adjuster	51	5.1
Ignition Switch Bolt	52	5.2
Headlight Mounting Bolts	53	5.3
License Plate Mounting Bolts	54	5.4
Seat Mounting Bolts	55	5.5
Footpeg Mounting Bolts	56	5.6
Engine Mounting Bolts	57	5.7
Exhaust Mounting Bolts	58	5.8
Clutch Cable Adjuster	59	5.9
Brake Cable Adjuster	60	6.0
Ignition Switch Bolt	61	6.1
Headlight Mounting Bolts	62	6.2
License Plate Mounting Bolts	63	6.3
Seat Mounting Bolts	64	6.4
Footpeg Mounting Bolts	65	6.5
Engine Mounting Bolts	66	6.6
Exhaust Mounting Bolts	67	6.7
Clutch Cable Adjuster	68	6.8
Brake Cable Adjuster	69	6.9
Ignition Switch Bolt	70	7.0
Headlight Mounting Bolts	71	7.1
License Plate Mounting Bolts	72	7.2
Seat Mounting Bolts	73	7.3
Footpeg Mounting Bolts	74	7.4
Engine Mounting Bolts	75	7.5
Exhaust Mounting Bolts	76	7.6
Clutch Cable Adjuster	77	7.7
Brake Cable Adjuster	78	7.8
Ignition Switch Bolt	79	7.9
Headlight Mounting Bolts	80	8.0
License Plate Mounting Bolts	81	8.1
Seat Mounting Bolts	82	8.2
Footpeg Mounting Bolts	83	8.3
Engine Mounting Bolts	84	8.4
Exhaust Mounting Bolts	85	8.5
Clutch Cable Adjuster	86	8.6
Brake Cable Adjuster	87	8.7
Ignition Switch Bolt	88	8.8
Headlight Mounting Bolts	89	8.9
License Plate Mounting Bolts	90	9.0
Seat Mounting Bolts	91	9.1
Footpeg Mounting Bolts	92	9.2
Engine Mounting Bolts	93	9.3
Exhaust Mounting Bolts	94	9.4
Clutch Cable Adjuster	95	9.5
Brake Cable Adjuster	96	9.6
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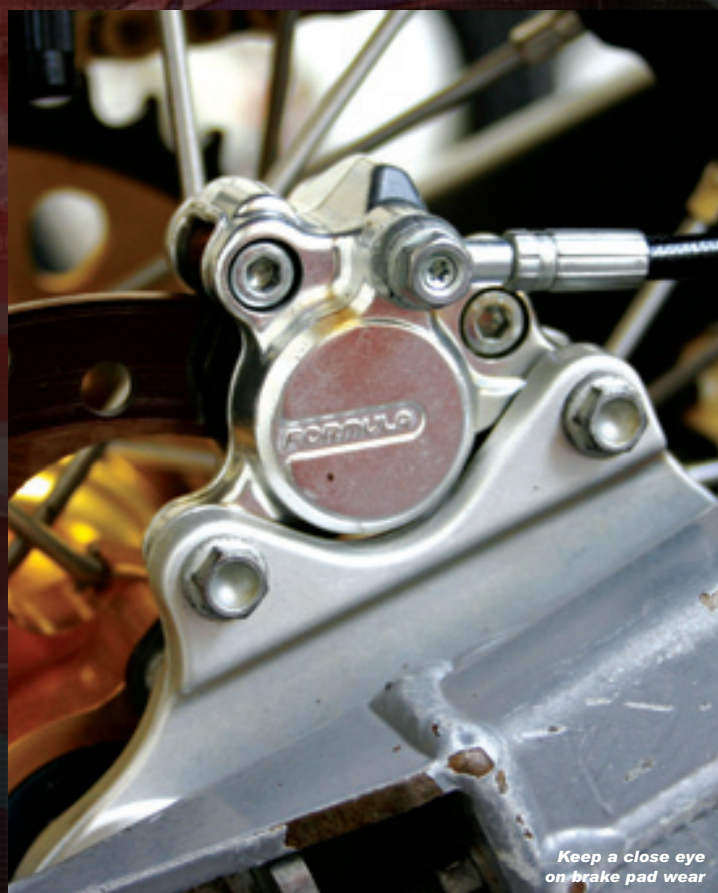
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The little Toomer does take on water when powerwashed



The seat clip can get undone during a race



Keep a close eye on brake pad wear

THE BAD...

There are a couple of areas where the little Toomer takes in water after a wash. These are the carburettor and the ignition cover. The carb needs to be drained after every powerwash and so does the left side ignition cover. These two jobs take just a couple of minutes and will keep the little orange running sweet.

Although the brakes work well, they could do with a little beefing up as they overheat quite easily in tough usage situations. The brake pads are

pretty prone to wearing out quickly too but the good thing is you can get pads from your local mountain bike shop.

The throttle cable is a little too short for higher handlebars but longer aftermarket cables are available.

The seat clip system is easily knocked during a race that results in the ejector seat being initiated.

The kickstart knuckle is prone to cracking around the fixing bolt.

I won't ever ride without my CT's, and wouldn't consider using anything else!



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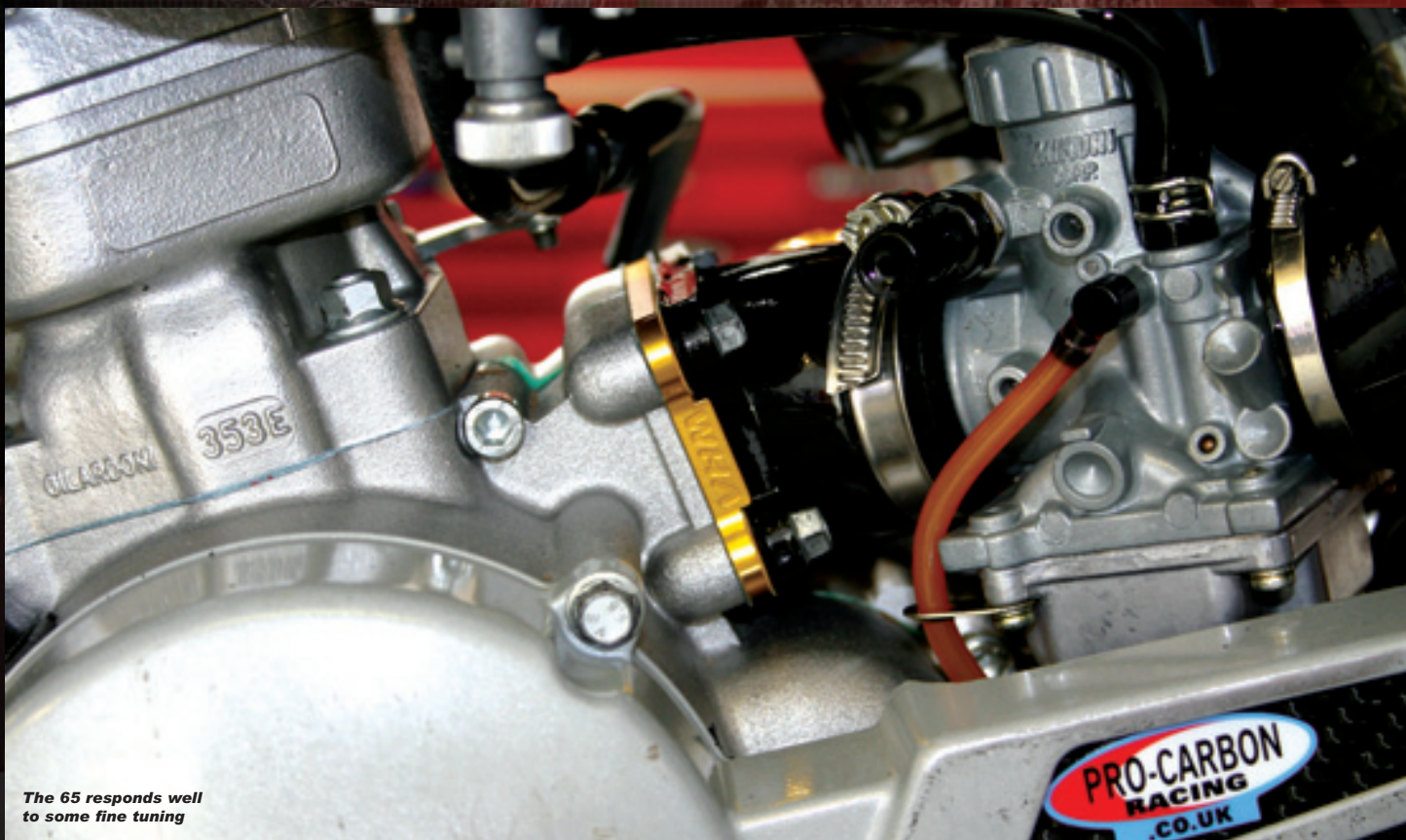
Life Without Limitations



Brake caliper from an '03 model is a bit beefier...



...and so's the kickstart, especially around the knuckle



The 65 responds well to some fine tuning

AND THE MODS...

When the motor is modified for more power the clutch should be the first port of call. The standard clutch takes even more grief with any increase in power so an upgraded clutch basket is a good purchase for the racers out there.

The hot tip on the gearing is to dump the standard 50-tooth rear sprocket and replace it with a 47-tooth unit. This allows a smoother transfer of power to the ground and the standard motor copes with this change easily.

Cylinder porting and crankcase work carried out by a well-trusted tuner will increase power.

Run either an '03 or '04 kickstart.

Some people are also running a '03 rear brake caliper too as they are a bit beefier.

The front forks react positively to tuning with the use of different oil weights. Weights of 2.5, 5 and 10 make for good results if you have time to test with the oil heights and weights to find the optimum setting. The available internals providing adjustment make final fine tuning easier at each track and are a good modification for this model.

So the tour of the KTM 65 SX is complete and the bike is a solid and ready to race little vehicle and when it comes down to it, it does look the nuts! Look out for another bike examination coming soon...



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OUT OF THE SHADOWS

Sarholz KTM's Marcus Schiffer steps forward to claim his place among the MX2 elite...

Words and photos by Alex Hodgkinson

MARCUS SCHIFFER has grown up in the shadow of Max Nagl but 2007 is the year that the 20-year-old from Frechen near Cologne has followed the Bavarian into the world spotlight.

Just eight days older than his Sarholz team-mate, 'Skip' has stepped into the limelight this summer racing top 10 at virtually every GP, taking his first podium in Sweden and looking good for his first German Masters title. So where's the extra speed come from?

"I've changed my attitude," admits Marcus frankly. "Even though I've done nothing else since I left school it never really sunk in that this is my job. It was a case of 'yeah, let's go out this evening' and that's what I did. I was just a typical teenager and my father never put his foot down. I know now he felt I had to realise what was necessary on my own. I should have realised much earlier that there were times when I had to tell myself 'go running!'"



© Magnus Andersson

Marcus Schiffer's new-found work ethic has seen him start to fulfil his potential and leap into the MX2 top 10



Perhaps sport came just too easily to a boy whose natural talent has seen him rise from the amateur ranks. "I never really took motocross too seriously as a kid. I was good at football too and when I was 10 I went to a boarding school for potential footballers in Cologne. I was a striker and a pretty good one too and we played against the youth teams of Premier League clubs like FC Cologne and Borussia Dortmund. Motocross was just a hobby – just for fun.

"It wasn't even until the last couple of years in the schoolboys that I rode the nationals. My dad used to take me to the local amateur races. I was 12 when I rode my first national."

Marcus is a first generation Schiffer as far as motocross is concerned. "My dad never raced but he always had a road bike. When I was three he treated himself to a new bike for his birthday and he took me along for the ride when he went to collect it with a trailer. I saw a PW50 in the shop window and just couldn't take my eyes off

it. I was stung, had to have one and didn't let up until I got one. I had my first race a year later."

Dad, who works at the Shell refinery on the Rhine, gave in and had to finance his son's hobby until 2001 – albeit with the help of the extended family. "When I was 11 and started to get good everyone clubbed together to buy me a new 80. They can't go to the races far away but they were all in Namur last month."

Up until Y2K Marcus had only ridden in the German equivalent of the AMCA but in 2001 the Schiffers tried the big time and he ranked third that year behind – who else – Nagl. The following year was a significant one too as Marcus moved to the 125s and was taken under the wing of Jef Janssen.

"Jef is a Dutchman who lives in Germany. He has a motocross school near Magdeburg and I owe him much more than just the help he gave me to race that year. Jef was – and still is – the major influence on my style and I owe my

potential to him. We went riding together a few weeks ago and it is still there for anyone to see. We have the same stance on the bike, we ride the same lines and everything and I owe my sand riding skills to him for sure.

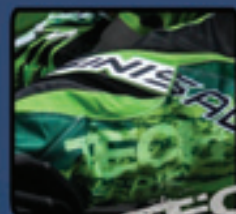
"Jef was a good if not a great rider in his own right but as a trainer he is one of the best. A champion is not always a good trainer and it is often the case that someone who was not real world class can explain better. Jef has a great way of putting it over to youngsters and I can see it in the kids he is working with now."

For 2003 Marcus found a place in the Kolling Yamaha team to attack the main national series but again the rankings did not reflect his potential with injury capping the season after a fifth place at the season opener in Kamp Lintfort. But his form the following season was enough to attract the attention of rival teams and for 2005 Kosak KTM outbid Sarholz – then still with Honda – for his services.

"It was the fact that Kosak were racing KTMs which swung the balance. I had always wanted to ride KTM – for me it is the nicest bike and the combination immediately clicked [with me] winning the 125 German title. I also got my first chance to sniff the air at GPs. I went to six rounds but I couldn't always qualify."

The deal with Kosak had been for two years but at the end of 2005 the team decided to return to its roots in the youth ranks and by mutual agreement Marcus' contract was taken over by KTM Germany who placed their acquisition with Team Sarholz who had by now taken over the orange GP commitments. And their confidence in Marcus was displayed with a three-year deal!

But Marcus, now in the same team as Nagl, remained in Max's shadow. "I don't have any



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problem with that. I got pretty close to him in my first year on the 125s but then he had moved on. Max was clearly better than me."

With one exception – sand!

"Even as a kid I was better in sand. It's taken me until this year to get used to hard-pack like they have in southern Germany and Italy. We don't have anything like that round our way – the tracks are pretty loose-surfaced and we only have one track at Kleinhau with any real hills. It's not easy to find a training track in Germany and anyone from the Rhineland goes to Holland for training.

"Even now I get better as the tracks get rougher and the way Youthstream prepare the tracks – rotivating the earth – has for sure helped me. But I think I have improved my hard-pack technique too. I spent two weeks with Stefan in the winter and then another week with his dad Harry – that was good for my technique."

Already in 2005 Marcus had stood out at Lierop, scoring 17 of his 20 GP points that day and the big days at the end of last summer were at Desertmartin – a second moto 10th – and a 22-point haul in Holland.

"I just love Lierop. The track is so wrecked by the end of the weekend – the holes are so deep it looks like a bomb hit it. And the bumps are like waves, so long. I hate the short stutter bumps you get on hard tracks. Those were the races that convinced me I could make it and were the impetus to train harder last winter. But I never expected this year to go as well as it has."

2007 has seen Marcus in the top 10 from the word go. "Valkenswaard was a dream. Okay, it was sand but I had felt terrible on Saturday with asthma and almost collapsed at the end of qualifying. I never expected to even finish the

races but ended up eighth overall."

And the confidence soared. "When you've got a top 10 ranking it motivates you to want more. And even when I dropped out of the top 10 for a while mid-summer it was the impetus to dig deeper, to get back up there."

Bellpuig was the conformation that he was not just a sand rider. "I even caught up to Tommy [Searle] in the first race. In the end it cost me a place because I fell off trying to ride round him in the final corner but I knew I could do it now."

Curiously, Sugo was the start of a weak mid-summer. "I was riding okay but I only got four points. Martin Barr jumped on me in the first race and the radiator was broken, then I fell off early on in race two. By the time I got going Cairoli had nearly lapped me but I could ride his lap times. For sure he was not flat-out but he was still riding fast enough to be leading and that pace dragged me back into the points."

Nothing went right in France and Bulgaria but then came Sweden!

"It was kind of weird to land on the



Schiffer chases TC in Italy





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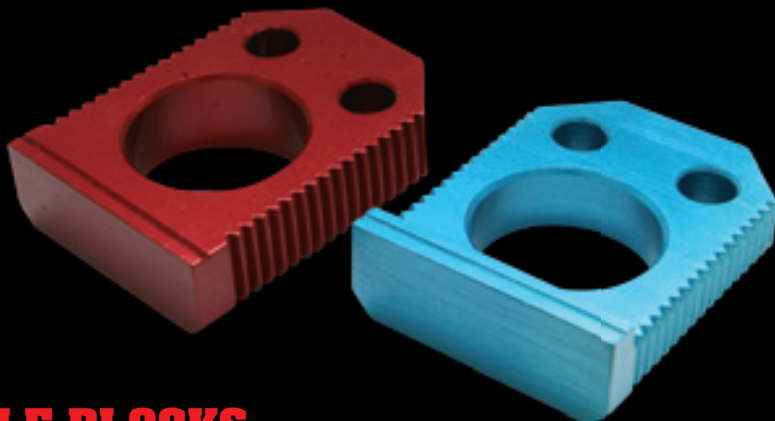
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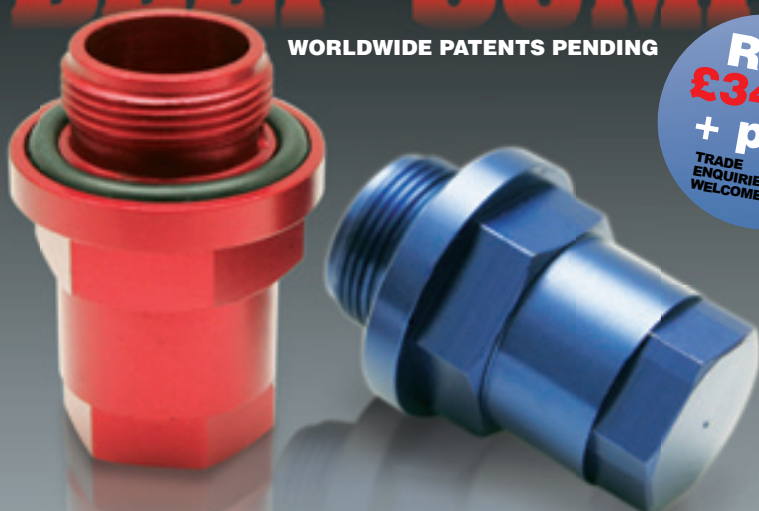
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Schiffer leads Gareth Swanepoel through the trees at Namur



© Magnus Andersson

podium from seventh and sixth but I was third highest points scorer on the day. I wouldn't believe it at first when Foxy stopped me for the podium. I'm just so glad my mechanic Eddy didn't signal me – for sure something would have happened.

"I have a good relationship with Eddy, this is our first year together and he is 27 but we get on well at the race track and away from it. He's cool and can separate work and pleasure but when we're working he gives me a kick up the arse when I need it!"

Since Sweden the points have kept rolling in. Even the hard-pack of Faenza and Loket brought top 10 finishes and a second podium in Namur would have been a deserved one for Marcus was the fastest man on the track bar Cairoli and Pourcel at the end of each moto.

And coming through the pack is a talent Marcus has had to come to terms with. "My big deficit are my starts. I was never much good at starting – I only ever took about 10 holeshots in my entire career – but I think the biggest problem now is that I am too heavy for MX2.

"I ride MX1 in the German Masters and I took two holeshots at the round last month after spending a week with Jef Janssen. We didn't actually practice starts but we rode a lot, we had fun and the atmosphere was good. I was always pretty big for my age but I'm over 80kg and that's too much for MX2. I worked hard to replace the fat with muscle last winter but I need to move to MX1 – I have already agreed terms with Burkhardt Sarholz to do just that next year."

And there is no reason why those charges through the pack, which we have become accustomed to in the MX2 GPs this year, should not be repeated on a 450 in 2008.

"I've always had to make a lot of passes but trying different lines is something I learnt from Jef. Sure I've got a pretty aggressive riding style but I'm not all over the track because I missed the line. The ideal line is not always the best because you can often line yourself up to make a pass by using different lines.

"Sometimes it's the little things like that which make the difference. At Mantova there were five difficult whoops but I found a line to bypass them by using an earth wall on the side of the track. And it was the same at the end of the whoops in Japan where I was jumping onto a bank to get drive through the next turn."

So Germany has two top riders after years in the wilderness and now he's learnt to take it all seriously, surely the boy from the Rhineland can mix it with the best in MX1 next year...



KYLE LEWIS



HE'S LOOKING TO HANG HIS BOOTS UP AT THE END OF THIS SEASON BUT AMA MX FANS HAVEN'T SEEN THE BACK OF KYLE LEWIS JUST YET



Steve Cox is an American moto-journalist who follows the entire AMA SX/MX tour. Since moving on from US weekly Cycle News he's struck out on his own to do the freelance thing and last year launched a new bi-weekly MX magazine – Motocross Illustrated – covering both AMA and GP action. He knows the sport and its personalities like few others and as our US Editor provides insight straight from the Stateside scene. And he's got a lovely wife who obviously goes for guys with big ears...

BEEN THERE...

...done that! After more than two decades of professional racing Kyle Lewis is finally hanging it up

Kyle Lewis has just about seen and done it all in professional motocross. He's won supercrosses, he's won Japanese National MX Championships and he's been a hero to privateers and vet racers alike for much of the latter portion of his career.

Now, in the middle of his final assault on the entire AMA season, the 36-year-old is looking forward to reaping the benefits of his late retirement...

DBR: You've been racing professional motocross for 20 years now, is that right?

KL: "I turned pro at the end of '85. It's pretty crazy."

DBR: So about 22 years then. How has the sport changed since you began in 1985?

KL: "There are a lot more races now than there were in the past and it's become more of a circus instead of a race. A lot of people go there just to hang out and the races are kind of secondary. It's more of a marketing tool now than a race."

"The people are still there to race but I think the industry is using the races more as a marketing tool. It used to be a sport. I think it's the gnarliest sport in the world as far as it's physically demanding and you have to be a tough person to handle it. I think motocrossers – A to Z, from the last guy to the first guy – are maybe stupid but definitely tough."

DBR: The public at large would probably agree that motocrossers are stupid but what drew you to this sport in the first place?

KL: "Adrenaline. I played soccer and I played baseball and I was an all-star in both of those but I just don't like team sports. When you let your team down or when a team member lets you down... I'd rather let myself down, not have my team let me down. We have a team but at the end of the day your result is your result. I just don't want to rely on someone else to help me win. In baseball you have nine players and one guy can ruin it for you. In motocross and supercross it's you and the mechanic at the end of the day. Sure, there is preparation from the team and all the work from the truck driver all the way up but at the end of the day it's you and your mechanic. It's pretty much an individual sport and that's why I chose that. If I lose, I lose."

DBR: What would you consider to be the highlight of your career?

KL: "There have been a number of highlights but winning my first supercross was pretty cool. It was the biggest high and biggest low when I won. Everyone's heard this story but my dad died 30 minutes after the race. It was kind of bittersweet. He was sick all day long, just not feeling good and right after I won he had a massive heart attack and died in

the parking lot at San Diego Stadium."

DBR: How did that affect your outlook on racing at that point? I would imagine your dad had a whole lot to do with your racing up to then.

KL: "Yeah, we raced together every weekend and when that went away it's a lot to ask from a 16-year-old. I was making more money than all of my buddies so when you're 16 and you wake up in the morning with no guidance and someone says 'let's go hang out at the beach where the chicks are' or 'let's go training' which are you going to do? I chose to hang out and be cool with my friends when I should've been training and everything. It kind of set me back. I realize it now but I definitely wouldn't change anything. It is what it is, you know? I just had no guidance. My mom was going through her deal – she had just lost her husband – so I was pretty much on my own when I was 16."



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DBR: As a father now, what does that experience do for how you approach life in general?

KL: "As far as me, it just makes me more conscious of my daughter. I try and instill guidance and help her with everything and do the best we can that way."

DBR: What led to your trip to Japan to race the Japanese Nationals in the '90s?

KL: "It was money. It was a good opportunity and it was probably one of the best experiences in my career. I got to ride complete works bikes. My team manager over there was awesome and he treated me like a son. It was a good time. He took care of me. I had some injuries over there and he was there just like a parent. He was awesome. Suzuki took care of me over there. I had a full-factory deal over there as opposed to being a privateer here so why wouldn't I go?"

DBR: But you've been solid on privateer equipment in the USA for most of your career...

KL: "Noleen [before Lewis left for Japan] was the next best thing to a factory ride. Clark Jones put on a serious effort backed by Yamaha. We got production parts – nothing factory – but for some reason he was able to put a programme together and it worked in my favour for a number of years. The guys at MotoXXX when I came back from Japan gave me an awesome tool. They supplied me with support and put up as serious an effort as we could – budgets permitting. It just kind of worked out. I'm not

going to cry about not having a factory ride, I just go to the races and do my job."

DBR: You're known for running near the front on your privateer equipment. What's the difference between privateer and factory efforts? Is it the equipment, the testing, the personnel...

KL: "It would be A to Z. In a factory ride, the riders don't think about anything but riding the motorcycle. It's a big confidence-booster that way and fitting a bike to your specifications is huge, even just in terms of confidence. You go to the racetrack and you know that your bike is the best and it's the best it can be for you. Then there's personnel taking care of everything else. There's no stress. The privateer guys can all attest to this that it's a big undertaking, right down to ordering your own flights to the races. Everything's done for you at a factory team so just making life easy means a lot. You do nothing but race. Allan [Brown, team manager of MotoXXX] tries to make it that way for us now but right down to the brakes on the bikes, everything's just a little bit off of the factory stuff. Everything. Everything's just not quite there."

"We do the best we can and our sponsors take care of us and provide the best possible bike. All of the stuff we use can be purchased and we get our stuff tailored probably more than the average guy because our sponsors are awesome but it's not factory stuff."

DBR: As a businessman outside of racing, has being a

privateer for much of your career helped you to come along as a businessman. It must at the very least make you more independent?

KL: "For sure. It kind of goes back to when I was 16. No-one was really taking care of me. I was doing everything on my own as far as negotiating all of my stuff and getting to where I am today. Being a privateer, you have to understand that it is a business. You have to budget and you have to make it work. Plain and simple. You have to build a budget, get to the race, deal with sponsors and negotiations, keep up relations... It's a full-time job and I think that part of it in dealing with everything I've dealt with on my end will benefit me with anything I'm going to do once I'm done racing."

"If anyone thinks it's easy, go ahead and give it a go. Go ahead and produce a race team and try to get around the country for 30 weekends a year. It's a big chore and it takes staffing and good people and an ability to keep good relations with the people you're working with. It's a pretty big job. I'm not saying I'm the best but I feel like I've done a good job over the years. Since 2000 with a bunch of help from the guys at MotoXXX – they're all my partners and friends – they built what we have."

"It started with a box van with me and a mechanic. The next year we had a little bit bigger truck and the next year an even bigger truck with more riders and then a semi and it has just evolved. We're on our 11th year. They started it, then lost a bit of ground, then brought me on to revamp it and that's where it is today."

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DBR: What are you going to miss the most about racing?

KL: "Racing's fun. I'm always going to ride a motorcycle but the adrenaline of racing... You go into the first turn with 20 or 40 guys, it's pretty intense. Especially if you're up front! You get an adrenaline rush being up front and then it's pretty intense being in the middle of 40 guys, too. I'll miss the fans, for sure. The fans are what make the sport go around. I've acquired a number of great fans who support me and I think a lot of the riders today don't even realize that the fans pay their bills."

"It's not just because they're a good rider that they get paid. It's the fans. That's why the guys, even if they're having a bad day, they should have a bad day behind closed doors. The people in the stands are the people

that buy the products that we use and that makes the sport go around. I have bad days but I try to treat people as I would want to be treated. I put my pants on one leg at a time and I think that's how everyone else does it."

DBR: What about racing are you not going to miss?

KL: "I'm looking forward to being home. Most of my friends are just guys that work – normal nine-to-five guys. That's who I am, also. I race motorcycles but I don't look at it as being anything special. It's just what I've always done. But I hate traveling. I hate the security crap – the false security, if you will. I'm just tired of the traveling and that's definitely going to be something I'm not going to miss. But I'll miss all of the people I know, the people I

get to see every weekend. They're like a second life. It would be stupid to say I'm not going to miss that but I won't be missing the travel itself."

DBR: Do you plan on showing up at a few races a year to keep your number or are you just going to be done with it at the end of this year?

KL: "I've set a goal that I want to keep my number until I'm 40. There are a couple tracks on the east coast that I really enjoy and I have fans that come up to me and thank me for being there so I'll definitely be at a couple races back east and I always enjoy Glen Helen which is the best track on the circuit, I think. I'll keep my number until I'm 40, which isn't too far away [laughs]."



AMA NATS WRAP

ANDREW SHORT AND MIKE ALESSI DUKE
IT OUT FOR THE HOLEY IN TEXAS





DOWN TO THE WIRE!

Four riders have a shot at the title coming into the AMA National finale but it's Grant Langston in the driving seat...

Since Ricky Carmichael moved up to the 250cc (or today's 450cc) class in 2000 there haven't been many other riders who have won a single event, much less a championship. And even though RC has won half of the races in the 2007 series he will not win the championship as he's only raced half of the races.

So the four riders vying for the 2007 AMA title – Timmy Ferry, Mike Alessi, Grant Langston and Andrew Short – have entered uncharted territory.

Of course, first things first, Makita Suzuki's

Ricky Carmichael has one last career goal to accomplish. With James Stewart out of the championship with an injured knee, Carmichael shows up to Millville – round nine of the 12-round AMA National Championship – with only one thing on his mind. Winning his 150th AMA National.

Honda's Kevin Windham grabs the opening moto holeshot but it's not long before Carmichael is right on his tail. Heading into lap two, Carmichael sneaks past Windham and takes off. With 14 laps still left to run the race for the win

is essentially over.

Ferry picks himself up off the ground in the first turn and starts from the back of the pack and on lap five Windham stalls while running second and relinquishes the spot to Short who has Langston hot on his heels. It's not long before Langston finds his way by Short in a tight left-hander. Alessi also works his way around Windham for fourth and the top five is set. So Carmichael takes the victory over Langston, Short, Alessi, Windham, David Vuillemin, Michael Byrne and Ferry. ▶



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WITH JUST GLEN HELEN TO COME GRANT LANGSTON HOLDS AN EIGHT-POINT LEAD



MIKE ALESSI'S WITHIN STRIKING DISTANCE OF THE MOTOCROSS TITLE



RICKY CARMICHAEL IS STILL THE FASTEST – BUT HE'S ONLY RACED HALF THE SERIES



ANDREW SHORT'S ONE OF FOUR RIDERS WHO COULD CLAIM THE CROWN AT THE FINAL ROUND OF THE SERIES

SERIES STANDINGS

Motocross

1	Grant Langston	394
2	Andrew Short	386
3	Timmy Ferry	381
4	Mike Alessi	379
5	Kevin Windham	322
6	Ricky Carmichael	291
7	James Stewart	290
8	Michael Byrne	218
9	David Vuillemin	207
10	Ivan Tedesco	198

Privateer Gavin Gracyk grabs the race two holeshot with Alessi, Short, Carmichael, Ivan Tedesco and former Brit champs competitor Yoshitaka Ahsuta chasing. Langston sits eighth on lap one while Ferry sits 14th.

Alessi moves quickly by Gracyk and leads the first couple of laps before giving way to Carmichael who begins to distance himself from the pack. Langston moves through the pack quickly to pass Tedesco on lap six then Short on lap nine and Alessi on lap 10 to grab second for the second moto in a row. Alessi hangs on for third, just in front of Tedesco who makes a late-race pass on Short for fourth. Ferry finishes sixth.

"There's no way that any of us that are going for the championship are going to gain more speed between now and the end of the season," Alessi says after another podium finish. "It's not possible. We're maxed out. This is as fast as we can go. There's nothing left that we're leaving on the table. In two weeks, when we go to Steel City, there's no way we're going to be two seconds faster. We're all going as fast as we can."

The day belongs to Carmichael as he records his 150th AMA National win. "It's disappointing that James wasn't here and I don't know the extent of the injury or how long he's going to be out," Carmichael says. "I've heard all kinds of things. If it's going to be a long injury it's a bummer. I would've tried to enjoy our last race together at Red Bud if that's going to be it. I wish he could've been here but the 150 thing isn't really what I set out to do. I planned on racing this all along. I felt like I had a good chance to beat James here. This is one of my good tracks."

The series then heads to Steel City for round 10. The first moto sees Windham and Alessi fight over the holeshot and Alessi grabs the early lead. Windham sits second and Langston is third with Kyle Keyton fourth, Byrne fifth, Ferry sixth and the man that came into the round tied for the points lead with Ferry – Short – running ninth.

The Alessi/Windham/Langston freight train distances itself from the pack right away and then Windham makes a pass on Alessi for the lead on lap six, only for Alessi to fight his way back by a few laps later. Eventually Langston catches up to Windham and as the two battle it allows Alessi to pull away. On the 11th lap Langston and Windham hit in mid-air over a jump, sending Windham off the track. He rejoins quickly in front of Langston and then lets Langston back by with a point of his finger as if to say "No! No!"

"It wasn't the middle one [finger]," Windham says. "Honestly, it wasn't. I think that it was honestly a mistake. Me and GL don't have any bad blood between us. I think it was an honest mistake but in the heat of the battle it p'ssed me off because it's something that really could've hurt me and could've took me out of the points."

"I knew I needed to let him go by and I wanted him to know I was mad but I wasn't going to get out there and hit him or take him out or do anything stupid. I have enough respect for everyone else not to screw up the championship battles."

Langston falls a few turns later on his own and then has to pass Windham again. He does so in the same section with three laps to go. Alessi goes on to take the victory over Langston and Windham who barely fights off Ferry at the finish. Short is fifth.

Windham and Gracyk fight over the holeshot in moto two and Windham leads from the early going as Langston works his way up from just inside the top five and Alessi chases him. Short is also near the front but Ferry goes down in the first turn after Jeff Alessi runs into him and gets his bike hung up in Ferry's. Ferry gets up 39th.

Windham leads nearly the entire moto with Langston and Alessi taking turns nipping at his heels. When Alessi is in front of Langston it's Alessi's overall win. When Langston is in front of Alessi the win is Windham's. For Langston to win the overall

he has to win the moto. With three laps to go Langston passes Alessi for second and then passes Windham for first. The drop from first to second for Windham means he goes from first to third overall while Alessi is second overall.

As well as taking the overall, Langston also takes over the points lead with only two rounds left to run. "I think every year we always go out there and give it everything we've got," Langston says. "For some reason I always find myself in these crazy, down-to-the-wire battles but I think it's fun and I think that's what keeps us going. That's what we strive for."

The penultimate round looks to be all Short as he grabs the opening holeshot and checks out. By the end of lap one Short holds a seven-second lead over Jeff Alessi and Antonio Balbi and it's growing. Langston finally finds his way into second in front of Mike Alessi but Short is as good as gone and scores the moto victory, moving into the points lead between motos by one over Langston, Ferry and Alessi.

"Once I got out front I just tried to put my head down," Short says. "I kept thinking that if I got a start, I could beat those guys..."

Short gets the start in moto two as well and it looks like a repeat of moto one as he pulls away out front until he falls and hands the lead to Langston. He gets up fourth and then falls victim to Langston's team-mate Josh Hill who Yamaha have moved up from the Lites class after the previous race in the hope that he will help Langston out. The finishing order is Langston, Alessi, Ferry, Hill and Short who loses an extra two points to Langston by virtue of losing fourth to Hill.

"Obviously, I'm happy with the way the day turned out," Langston says. "Shorty was really on it today and I didn't think I would have anything for him but it all came together in the end."

So Langston heads into the series finale with an eight-point lead over Short who is five in front of Ferry who is two in front of Alessi. Talk about close...

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RYAN VILLOPOTO IS A GOOD BET TO RETAIN HIS LITES TITLE



BROC HEPLER WINS FIRST TIME OUT AT STEEL CITY



THE GATE DROPS ON THE LITES AT MILLVILLE

VILLOPOTO PULLS CLEAR

Defending champ at last gets a gap on Ben Townley

Monster Energy Kawasaki's Ben Townley has made a habit out of capitalizing on his team-mate Ryan Villopoto's mistakes and misfortunes during the AMA Lites series but the boot has now switched to the other foot.

At Millville, Townley gets the start only for Villopoto to pass him for the lead and then have Townley hound him and pass him back to win moto one followed by their team-mate Brett Metcalfe. Moto two is all Villopoto, though, as the defending champ passes early leader Trey Canard (in his first-ever AMA National) and team-mate Townley from outside the top five to take the lead and the win, although he remains two points behind Townley for the championship.

Townley is second while Metcalfe completes a Pro Circuit sweep of the podium.

Then at Steel City the Pro Circuit squad manages to one-up itself. Villopoto, Townley and Metcalfe all find themselves at the bottom of a first-turn pile-up in moto one thanks to a collision

between Villopoto and new team-mate Austin Stroupe who's racing his first National.

Stroupe assumes the lead, then falls before lap one is over and gets up third behind Yamaha's Broc Hepler and Honda's Tommy Hahn. The three PC pilots work their way through the pack until eventually finishing third (Villopoto), sixth (Townley) and eighth (Metcalfe) while Hepler takes the moto win and Stroupe is second in his first-ever AMA National moto.

Moto two is Villopoto's as he grabs a massive holeshot and takes off. Townley is up front too, only to fall in the early going. He still recovers for second in the moto (and overall) while Metcalfe finishes third in the moto (and overall) and Stroupe fights through from the back of the pack up to 12th (and fourth overall). The PC team finishes 1-2-3-4 while Villopoto moves out to a six-point lead with two rounds left to run.

However, it all comes undone at the penultimate round in Texas for Townley as he falls again in the early going and starts moto one 35th while Villopoto immediately chases down Hepler for the lead. Townley only recovers for sixth while Villopoto takes the win and their team-mate Stroupe passes Hepler on the last straightaway for second.

Moto two is more Villopoto as he leads every lap. Townley gets to second early but just can't keep up with Villopoto so BT leaves Texas with 19 points to gain on his team-mate at Glen Helen if he wants the championship.

For Villopoto this means he controls the championship heading into the series finale. "I've just been taking it one race at a time," Villopoto says. "I plan to keep doing that."

SERIES STANDINGS

Lites

1	Ryan Villopoto	497
2	Ben Townley	478
3	Josh Grant	346
4	Jason Lawrence	277
5	Ryan Dungey	267
6	Jake Weimer	226
7	Brett Metcalfe	202
8	Tommy Hahn	202
9	Brock Tickle	189
10	Kyle Chisholm	176

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END GAME!

Our industry insider gives you the industry inside line on what's happening inside the industry...

Words by STEVE MATTHES Photo by STEVE COX

Well, by the time this makes it across the pond to Sean, to the printers, on the newsstands and in your grubby little hands, the AMA Toyota MX series presented by FMF will be over.

Ryan Villopoto has a 19-point lead on former world champion Ben Townley. We started off at the first round with five riders going at it and we go into the last race with just these two contenders. Ryan Dungey, Josh Grant and Jason Lawrence showed early on that they were able to match and even beat these two sometimes but injuries and other factors caused them to drop off one by one until we are just left with the two Monster Energy/Pro Circuit Kawasaki riders.

Since around round eight BT and RV have been the class of the field. Townley had the points lead but just couldn't stop having problems. Crashes have hurt Ben while Villopoto has just been a machine – he's been getting the starts and absolutely flying. His times have been faster than the 450 guys!

Jason Lawrence showed some great speed early on but couldn't get the starts, I even predicted on the Racer X Webcast that J-Law would win a moto before this whole thing is over but he couldn't seem to gate with the top guys and whether it's Hangtown or Canada Heights, the starts mean everything (I just wanted to throw a reference to my home country and again, try to make you guys like me!)

Josh Grant won Mt Morris, looked like he was going run the pace but I think these kids just can't match RV and BT's training programme and the way they approach the sport. One of the legacies that RC has left behind is the legacy of his programme. It goes like this. Take your salary and invest it in your career – instead of buying the truck and lifting it seven feet and having a stereo that could blow your eardrums, buy some land, build a SX track, hire a good trainer and surround yourself with people that make your riding easy. RV and BT have done this and most of the other 250F kids are just trying to figure this out. I think Grant is one of these kids that have to figure it out to get to the next level.

Ryan Dungey is just a rookie and right now I give him a mulligan for not stepping up and beating the top two guys. He's figuring it out and has a beautiful riding style. He has hired Johnny O'Mara to be his trainer and that's a good step. He seems like a good kid with a good head on his shoulders and has a great future in the sport. Makita Suzuki is wise to lock him up for many years. The only worry with him is that once he starts reading all his magazine clippings and has the money rolling in, he figures that he has it made and – like some riders in the paddock – realizes that it still pays pretty good to be a top five guy. I think Ryan is one guy that is immune from this but we'll see...

In the 450 class we go into the final round seeing that Grant Langston has an eight-point lead over Andrew Short. Grant has caught fire at the right time winning two out of the three races since points leader James Stewart went out with a knee injury. In the other race he went 2-2 behind RC which is kind like winning the human class. GL has shown the speed and determination that has seen him win titles in the past. He was not happy with his bike and wasn't shy about telling people early on in the outdoor series. As I wrote in Racer X Canada, he might as well have flown a plane with a banner behind it telling the world "I hate my bike".

He also mentioned a few times that the 2008 Yamaha 450 was much better and as soon as he got on that he was going to do much better. He got the 2008 at Washougal and has gone 4-1-2-2-2-1-2-1 since! I guess he knows what he's talking about. From what I gather the '08 has a slightly flexier frame that allows GL to really put the bike where he needs it to be.

Andrew Short was the points leader for a little bit and even though he has a chance to win this thing, people seem to overlook him. I'm not sure why, he has what a champion needs – good starts, limit your bad motos to top five and most importantly speed. People were saying that he didn't have the speed but he showed in the first moto at Texas when he

holeshot and ran away from the pack that he has the speed. He grabbed the lead in the second moto and was checking out when a fall dropped him back. That fall may have cost him the title. If he had won – and he certainly looked like he could have – he would've been in the lead going into Glen Helen.

What has happened to Tim Ferry? He is the paddock's choice to win the title as everybody wants to see the old veteran come through on his last chance. He had the lead after Washougal and even Millville he was only a few points back. Unfortunately for him, his notorious bad starts started popping up at the worse time. He has been near the back of the pack a few times in the last few races and when all his rivals are up front that makes it hard on ol' Red Dog.

His speed has been great, he was the fastest guy in practice and slices through the pack better than a hot knife through butter but you can't give the top guys a head start. He has not been in the lead since his second moto win at Lakewood, Colorado. He faces a pretty big deficit going into the last round and it doesn't look good. No matter what, he can

take solace in the fact that he had an incredible year and has done better than pretty much anyone could have predicted. Even me and I'm a big fan of his having worked as his mechanic for four years.

The last round took place in Texas at a brand new track and facility. Tony Miller is the promoter's name and he did a wonderful job with what he had. Which was a flat field! He brought in some sand, made big, fun and easy jumps for the guys and the soil was prepped perfectly. The pits were great, lots of room for parking and he laid gravel down for the semis which was welcomed by the teams. "Yeah, yeah," I can hear you guys now, "but did you have wash bays?" Well, no we don't have that cool feature yet but the AMA finally put tents and a TV screen in the mechanics' area. We're getting closer to the GPs in the facility end of it. And we even pay purse money!

Next month I will report on the Motocross of Nations from Budds Creek, Maryland. I'm looking forward to this race and if any of you Brits are over and see me, stop and say hi!



The AMA Lites class is a two-horse race – and both horses ride for Pro Circuit Kawasaki



David Philippaerts is aiming to run at the front in '08 only he'll be on blue – not orange – machinery



GOING PLACES!

David Philippaerts is headed to Rinaldi Yamaha for '08

Words and photos by Alex Hodgkinson



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Battle Royale!

Taking on Tony...

"I'm already excited about racing Tony again in 2009. And for Italy it is for sure good. Italy has won a lot in 125 and MX2 with Puzar, Chicco Chiodi, Tony and me but in MX1 we have only had Andrea Bartolini. To have two of us fighting for the title in MX1 will be good for the sport and the fans."

"And of course I am also excited to be racing against Tony again. We had some fabulous races last year, Sweden, Montevarchi and many more. We are very good friends but we both race hard and give no quarter. And we have very different styles. We are often using different lines and neither of us wants to be beaten by the other. It is a real rivalry but a friendly one."

"Tony is so fast this year but I think it was more that 2006 was a bad year. After he won the title in 2005 I think he got distracted from racing too much. It's the same for Pourcel this year. Tony has trained hard, prepared well and he gets the results every week."

"He has continued his progression while the other riders in MX2 have stood still. Last year it was me, Tony and Pourcel. This year I am not there and there are only the two of them for the win. Tyla is there but only for thirds and fourths – not for the win."



WHEN THE most successful team in world motocross comes knocking at the door you know you've made it. And when you're Italian, the call to race for Rinaldi Yamaha is like a dream come true!

"To race for Rinaldi Yamaha is a dream for all Italian riders," admits David Philippaerts. "Rinaldi is to motocross what Ferrari is to Formula One. Everybody has nothing but respect for the team and the people who work there – their record speaks for itself. They have won every year since 2001 without a break. They are the best team, they have the best bike."

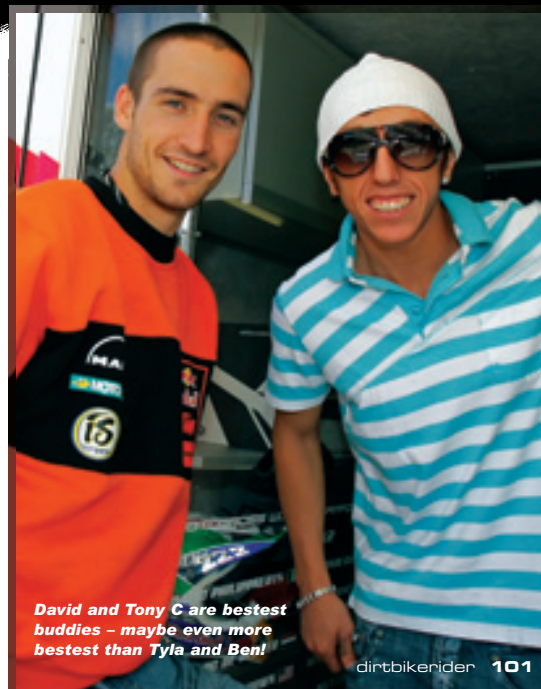
The energetic 23-year-old, the last man to put a two-stroke in the top three of a GP moto when he chased home best buddy Tony Cairoli at Namur two-and-a-half years ago, has won seven GPs – in both MX1 and MX2 – since that stunning performance which earned the then privateer factory bikes from KTM.

And the refreshingly open resident of Pietrasanta, the offspring of a Flemish father and Italian mother, is quick to speak highly too

of the firm whose bikes have helped him to world prominence. "I had three good years on the factory team. KTM is also a great team but after five years riding KTM I needed a change, a fresh breeze, a new challenge. I needed this in my mind."

David's first year on 450s has seen its highs and lows. "This year has been one to gain experience in MX1. It is a big, big change from MX2. It was difficult at the first few GPs but I have moved up to be racing for top three in the series and every race gets better and better."

"I won a lot of motos in international races at the start of the year but I never underestimated the strength of the opposition in the GPs. My physical condition was already good in February and I won a moto at Mantova but Valence meant nothing. And in the Italian championship I had no-one to beat. The standard is very low, just like MX3. Second was Salvini and you see in the GPs he can't finish better than 15th or 16th. Yes, I won but it was not really a good preparation. I had no benchmark and when you don't



David and Tony C are bestest buddies – maybe even more bestest than Tyla and Ben!

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have to push, you don't find your limits."

It is to David's credit that he has already come so close to the ultimate goal in motocross despite a blank day in the opening GP. "The zero score in Valkenswaard was not my problem. My condition was good, I had the speed too but the bike broke. It was a blow to lose so many points at the start of the series but in a way I am happy because I proved that I can come back in my head."

"I think it did affect me in Spain but KTM worked very hard to take care of the problem and already in Portugal I was able to make the podium. The factory also made some changes to the engine before Germany and I had a good week testing before the race. I liked the changes and could push for the win."

"We didn't win an overall since then – though I have won a moto at Namur and had a top three everywhere except Faenza. That was a disappointment because the Italian public and I both expected much there but I had hurt my shoulder a few days before. I holeshot the second moto but couldn't hold onto it. That injury cost me a lot of points both there and in Czecho."

"The competition at GP level is so intense."

You know, I don't think people outside the teams appreciate how much development work is going on all the time. It's nothing you can see from outside as we race past but the bikes are being developed all the time.

"Barragan is also fast but we are both racing on the limit. The bike works good but you see we have both been crashing and I think the other teams have improved their bikes while we stood still."

But orange is almost a thing of the past for David. So exactly what does he expect when he joins the blues?

"I know that the team is looking long-term for me to take over from Josh in 2009 but I will be pushing for victory in 2008. I will try anyway. We will see how the season develops. If I am back in the points – out of the title fight – and it is possible for me to help Josh then I will do so. But maybe Josh will do the same for me if the roles are reversed. It is a good team and Josh is also a good person. We are so similar in many ways – every year he has worked and worked and I am the same. I like people who work hard for success like me and Josh. I think we will have a good year!"



Big Brother's Little Brother Presenting Deny Philippaerts...

David's kid brother Deny goes to the final round of the European championship – the stepping stone to GP glory – leading the points chase but has also had his first taste of GP action at Faenza.

"He didn't have a good race at Faenza. He only got to race one heat from reserve and he broke his goggles in that. It is always difficult to start only the second heat because the track has changed so much since the last time he had ridden in the morning so I don't think his results are a true reflection of what he can do."

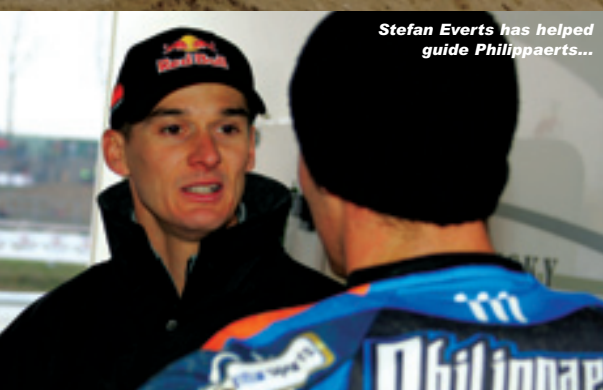
"He is fast but I think he needs to change team next year. It is a very small team. They try hard but they are not experienced enough to go to the GPs. The step from European to GPs is difficult enough anyway and it is particularly important to have a good team around you when you come to the GPs."

"Once you have started to qualify every week and scored some points it is easier but if you start badly you can dig a hole for yourself. Perhaps he will also race Yamaha but we didn't speak about it yet."

"We are very different, me and my brother – very different style on the bike and also different character. I am very open – I want to chat and be friends with everyone. I live every day for now and want to take the maximum out of every single one. My brother is more introverted. He doesn't take a lot of contact with the other riders."

"Deny can also be a good GP rider. I hope I can help him find a good ride for next year. He cannot be top next year but if he gets the right chances then I am sure he too can make it to top five in the world."

Can Deny make the grade?
His big bro says yes



Stefan Everts has helped
guide Philippaerts...



...but not as much as
Georges Jobe has

Best boss?

Everts or Jobe?

During the last two seasons David has tasted success under the leadership of two of the sport's greatest champions. How does he rate Georges Jobe and Stefan Everts as team boss?

"They both have their special qualities. Stefan is a good team man but Georges is best when he is working one-on-one with a rider."

"Last year Georges only had two riders to take care of by the time I joined the factory team – just Barragan and me. But even then I could feel that it would have been even better if there had only been one of us there. When Georges only has one rider to deal with and can be there for that rider all day, every day, he can find the maximum."

"Stefan is better for the team as a whole – for me, for Barragan, for Tommy, for Tyla – to be there for everyone. For KTM it is for sure better to have someone like Stefan but for me personally it was better with Georges. We were so close and worked so intensely and you saw the results."

"There were so many little things which he can see and give to a rider. Like the Swedish GP where he saw that it was not necessary to make the final turn because the finish line was not straight. Both Stefan and Georges have their heart in winning but for Georges it is not important how you win, it is only important that you win!"



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ON THE ROAD...

...or in the air, travelling is part and parcel of the life of a GP motocross racer – but glamorous it most certainly ain't!

Words by Alan Milway

FOR SOMEONE who rides their bike for a living there are many upsides – the best kit, a job you love, fame! But there are clearly some downsides and some areas that are often not fully appreciated by the rest of us...

Travel conjures up visions of airports and ski trips for some, M25 rush hour for others. For some reason there is also an illusion of it being pampered fun. Unless there are chauffeurs or private jets involved, for the most part getting from race to race involves a lot of time sat stationary in a small metal box of some description without a whole lot to do – not good if you're trying to physically and mentally prepare to race against the world's best MXers but it's a necessary evil that top riders have to deal with.

Schedules don't get much more punishing than racing the Japanese GP one weekend, then lining up at Langrish for a British championship round the next. Tom Church of the Molson Kawasaki team was contesting both events and offered to give us an insight into what he went through during this short period...

DBR: To give us an idea of how travelling to Japan affects a normal routine, can you give us a brief description of a typical week during the season for you?

TC: "A typical week for me during the season is recovery and rest on Monday from the weekend's racing, then I either ride or train on Tuesday depending on how I feel. I always ride Wednesday, a light session on Thursday and then on Friday rest or travel to the next race. This can change depending on how I feel taking into account tiredness, injuries, illness etc."

DBR: As we know the Japanese GP was an exception to the normal routine – can you describe your travel arrangements for the Japan GP and then having to get back for Langrish?

TC: "We left on the Monday and arrived in Japan on Tuesday to give us time to adapt to the new time change etc. This meant the week was geared up for travelling and adapting as opposed to riding. The bikes and equipment are all flown out too at the same time. After the weekend's race we left Japan on the Monday and arrived in England on the Monday with the time changes so I had a bit of time to recover before Langrish."

DBR: What's the biggest problem you associate with the travel you have to do? Tiredness? Lack of training time? Poor diet? Boredom? Do you watch dvds, listen to music, read magazines etc?

TC: "The hardest thing about travelling for me is tiredness and interruption of regular sleep. I plan ahead so that my diet is good and hydration is good. Travelling just literally tires you out even though you're not actually doing anything, I find it hard. I pass the time either reading books or watching films."

DBR: Did you have to make any special arrangements for the bikes, kit, accommodation and food over in Japan or is all of that looked after for you? If so who looks after that side of things? Do they ever get it wrong?

TC: "Luckily the team took care of everything so I just arrived with a hotel address and everything was taken care of. Riding for the Molson team is good like that – everything is organized, there's never a stress."

DBR: How did you feel in Japan – was there jet lag? Did you feel fresh and train or did you need to rest?

TC: "The first day didn't seem too bad and I went for a light jog to try and kickstart my body into the time zone but on the Thursday I really started to feel it so I just rested. I managed to sleep but still felt tired in the afternoons. By Saturday morning I felt good for the race."

DBR: What did you do for training?

TC: "One light jog, nothing strenuous."

DBR: How did the GP go for you in Japan – was it harder or easier than a European GP?

TC: "It's harder on the travel side of things than a European race. There is a relaxed atmosphere because everyone is like a community and there's not as much pressure to qualify. On race day when the gate drops it's the same as any GP as the top 15 are all there. I had a ninth in the first race and a DNF in the second after a crash on the start."

DBR: After the race was there a rush to get flights, pack the bikes up etc or did you fly and leave the team to it?

TC: "We flew on the Monday – the team took care of the bikes so we headed to Tokyo for our return flight the next day."

DBR: What did you do between the Japanese GP and Langrish?

TC: "After coming home I felt okay for the first two days but then the jet lag caught up with me! I felt really run-down and had no energy and really struggled for Langrish as it was close. I just rested as much as possible and drove to the race Sunday morning and actually felt okay once I was there. It was a tough week! I felt like I had the flu all week."

DBR: Did you feel the knock-on effect from all the travelling at Langrish? Were you tired or did you feel fresh?

TC: "I definitely wasn't 100 per cent but managed to cope..."

A detailed photograph showing various pieces of motocross equipment scattered on a brown dirt ground. In the foreground, there's a white and black motorcycle boot with "PUMPS" written on it. Next to it is a silver tube of "PUMP X" lubricant. Behind the boot are two helmets, one black and one red, along with a blue and white jersey featuring a shield logo. A pair of brown leather riding boots is visible on the right side. A black strap with "It's Deep" repeated is also present. The background is more dirt and some dark clothing items.

medical milway

Alan Milway is a qualified sports scientist who runs MX Fitness specialising in training motocross and enduro riders. For more information on how Alan can help you train go to his website www.mxfitness.co.uk or call him on 07810 827427

The Japanese GP adds a fantastic flavour to the GP series and is great for the Big Four factories to see the top flight racers on their kit on home turf. However, it's not all sightseeing and autograph signing for the riders because of the tight schedule.

Tom came back strongly at Langrish after the extra travel that not all his rivals had to endure and had a fantastic second race third for fifth overall. Then it was time for a well earned rest in his own bed (all snuggly under his favourite Superman duvet – SL)!

dirtbikerider 107

A detailed photograph showing various pieces of motocross equipment scattered on a brown dirt ground. In the foreground, there's a white and black motorcycle boot with "PUMPS" written on it. Next to it is a silver tube of "PUMP X" lubricant. Behind the boot are two helmets, one black and one red, and a pair of brown leather riding boots. A blue and white jersey with a logo is also visible. The background is more dirt and some blurred gear.

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A detailed photograph of various motocross equipment scattered on a brown dirt ground. In the foreground, a white and black GoPro action camera lies horizontally. Behind it, a pair of tan leather motocross boots with silver buckles are visible. To the left, there's a blue and white jersey with a red and yellow logo. A black helmet with a red chin strap sits in the center. Another helmet, mostly black with some red, is partially visible behind it. A black wristband with white text "It's Deep" is also present. In the bottom right corner, a silver tube of Pump-X lubricant lies diagonally. The background shows more dirt and parts of other gear, creating a sense of a rider's kit laid out after a race or practice session.

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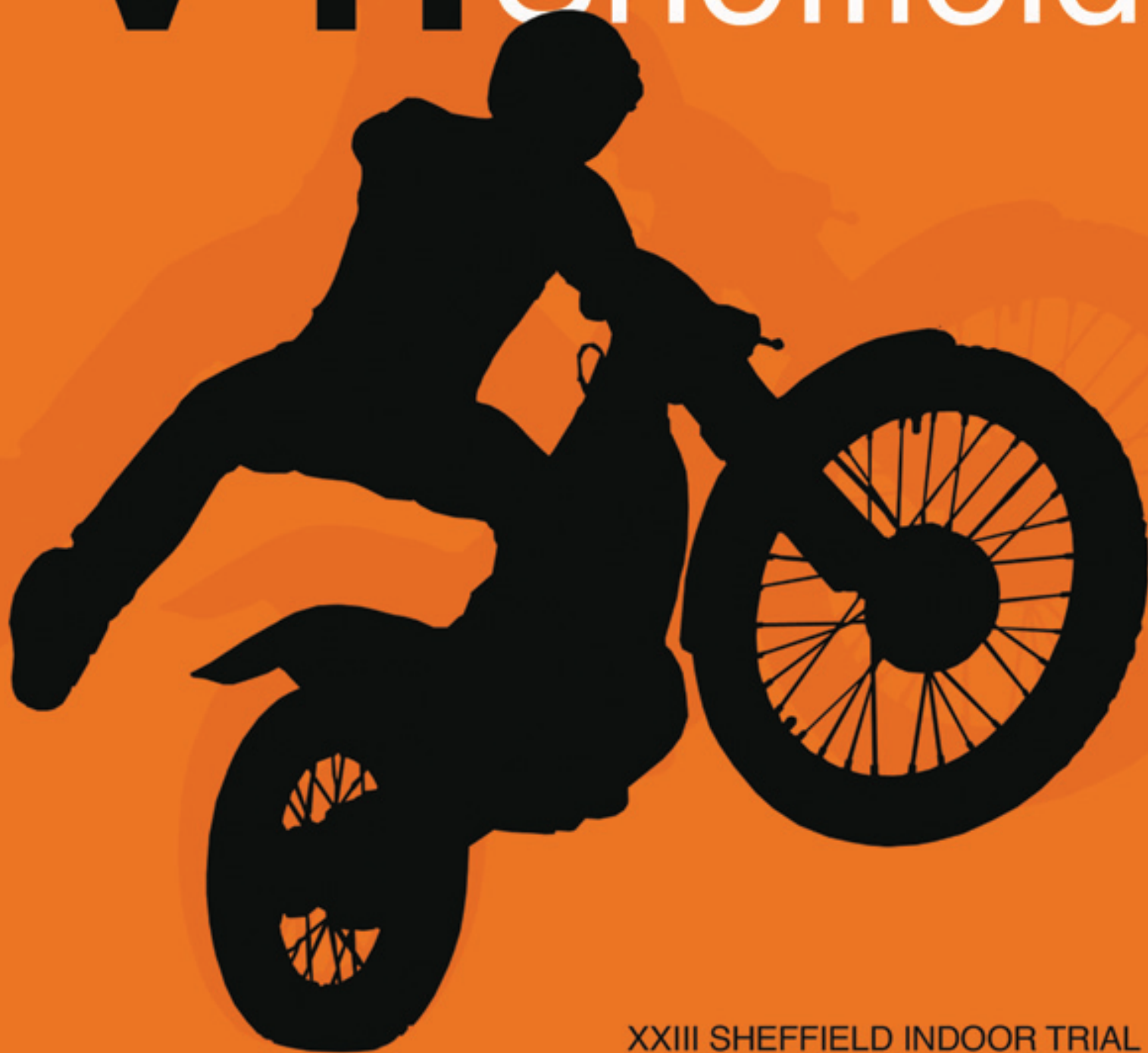
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BIG bore!

There's normally at least one big bore at every party and the Sixsixone Ride Day is no different - only this time we get to ride her (her being Matt Yeo's KX276F)...

Words by Suttty Photos by still-mx.co.uk



In the right hands – and on the right track – Matt Yeo's 276 will keep up with a four-fiddy, turn sharper and require a lot less energy



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For full-grown racers the decision between buying an MX1 or MX2 class missile can be a bit of a toughie. Do you go for the full-blown brutal power of a four-fiddy or the much more useable and chuckaboutable 250? Hmm... Of course things don't always have to be so black or white and sometimes it's possible to toe the line down the middle and get a bit of the best from both worlds. How? How about an oversize 250F?

Oversize 250Fs are a bit of a taboo subject in the UK and while nobody's ever been tested and found guilty of running an oversize motor in the Maxxis British motocross championship rumours are rife that they do exist. And if anyone is guilty of running oversize then chances are that it's Rick Peterson of American tuning company Rick Peterson Motorsports who made it possible.

Rick started building big-bore two-smokers in the mid '80s with hybrids like his YZ167 receiving rave reviews from American motocross magazine Motocross Action whose aged staff could legally use such 'cheater bikes' week-in, week-out in the Vet class races they rode.



Fast forward to '02 and Peterson built his first YZ302F using Yamaha's ground-breaking 250F as a base. Created purely for the Vet class the 302Fs soon started outselling the two-stroke kits but there was a slight problem – the stock cast aluminium cylinders could only be bored out so far before durability dramatically suffered so Rick was forced to seek another solution.

After splashing out 100-Gs on some rather sexy CNC milling machinery Rick created a billet aluminium cylinder with a nikasil-plated liner that was much more durable than a bored-out stocker. That was what would later become the first RPM Ice Cube. Since then their popularity has increased and Ice Cubes are now available for all four Japanese manufacturers' 250F bikes in two versions – 276 and 315cc.

The 276cc version bolts straight on and requires no additional motor work (the 315 needs crank modifications as it runs with a longer stroke) and priced at just under 1000 US Dollars (approximately £500 at the current exchange rate) is probably the cheapest way of extracting that many more horses from your bike's engine.

We've already mentioned fitting an Ice Cube to your 250F would automatically mean that it's no longer MX2 class legal but if that's not a worry to you then crack right on. One man who has cracked right on is weekend warrior and DSM co-owner Matt Yeo who's bolted a bright blue 276cc Ice Cube cylinder on to his already distinctive KX250F.

For the 38-year-old AMCA racer, fitting the Ice Cube was less about gaining out and out horsepower and more about finding a fully legal way of moving up to the more sedately scrapped out Open class without resorting to riding a 450. "If I'm honest I can't hang on to a 450 – they're just too much," reckons Matt. "The 276 is a much more rideable bike and at the level I race it has more than enough power to run with the big bikes." ►





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Of course we could have taken Matt's word for it but passing up the chance of riding the 276 at one of Britain's finest practice facilities – that's Cusses Gorse near Salisbury – would have just been foolish! So off we went to the Sixsixone Ride Day to get stuck in on Matt's big bore weapon and tuck into some mighty fine hog roast too...

At first glance you can't help noticing that this bike is a bit special – but not as special as the hog roast – as it's laden with classy Sunline ARC parts a-plenty, an FMF Power Core silencer with Powerbomb header pipe, blue silicon hoses, the Ice Cube and then finished off with black plastics and 212-mx.co.uk custom graphics. Sweet.

It's good to know that the extra 27ccs doesn't affect the ease with which the KXF starts – either from cold or toastie warm – and after one or two prods on the lever the motor comes alive sounding no different to a standard 250F. But out on the track you soon notice the difference.

The beefed up low to mid-range power allows you to pull much taller gears than on the stock KXF. When I originally tested the MX2 class Kawasaki I constantly found myself stuck between gears – either labouring the motor or bouncing off the rev-limiter. But with the 276 that problem's a thing of the past and when ridden sensibly the motor rarely feels like it's in too high a gear and when it's singing constantly craves another upshift. In retrospect I think it would have been wise to slide a 46 tooth rear sprocket on there – stock's 48 – as this motor packs enough punch to pull such a set up.

Despite the abundance of grunt, second – not third – gear starts are the way to go even though a fairly swift upshift is required to get the most from the motor. While the 276 may not have anywhere near enough ponies to outdrag a 450 it certainly stays somewhere close and should more than hold its own on the type of shorter start straights found at most club meetings.

One area in which the 276 does excel when compared to its MX1 classmates is in turns. There's no denying that the 276 is infinitely easier to ride more quickly through corners than either a 450 four-popper or 250 two-stroke. On a track like Cusses Gorse which is pretty well suited to 250Fs anyway, the lightning-fast turning characteristics and beefed up power are a deadly combo and once in the flow lap times just come tumbling down.

While average lap times are no lower on the 276 than on my regular ride – a KX450F – the smaller bike does require much less brute strength to get around the track. This makes it easy to go harder for longer and means there's a bit more energy left in the tank towards the end of a moto which helps me keep my lap times more consistent at a time when they'd usually tail off.

The general feeling from this bike is positive. For average club racers who race their 250Fs in 'open class' events the 267cc kit might just be the ideal solution for increasing engine output on a limited budget – you can expect around a three to four hp increase for around £500-600 plus labour of fitting. Personally I'll be sticking with my 450 but if you're a 250F pilot who wants more firepower check out www.maxpower-engines.com

**BIG
bore!**





Max Nagl takes two clear holeshots at Lierop on his Sarholz KTM tank (12kg heavier than the factory bikes) but Steve Ramon (11) is the champ, Kevin Strijbos (2) wins the day and Marc De Reuver, alongside Billy MacKenzie behind Strijbos, emerges from scoring 41 points in three months to win this moto at the last turn! But what does Seb Pourcel (90) think he's doing?

LONG SHOT!

Six weeks ago you'd never have put your money on Steve Ramon to lift the MX1 crown - but this is motocross where anything can (and does) happen...

Words and photo by Alex Hodgkinson

IF ANYONE had been taking bets on the MX1 world series six weeks ago you'd have got pretty long odds on Steve Ramon. But when the fat lady sings at Lierop at the start of September the 27-year-old Belgian, whose most recent GP win was on April 13 2003, has clinched his second world title. "I don't care what those people think about me not winning GPs. I am champion and that is all that matters!"

Of course, Josh Coppins - 107 points in front when he fractured his shoulder blade at Loket - should have been champ and, yes, Kevin Strijbos is top scorer at four of the last five GPs. But titles are won over a season and Ramon scores in every moto, including the final 10 when he's riding with both wrists taped up - one because of a sprain and the other because of a scaphoid injury.

And he keeps his cool at Lierop, riding two controlled races to mount the podium for the first time since June. With the title secure Steve even takes the lead twice in the final moto of the series. It's heavy going at Lierop and Billy MacKenzie also gets it right for fifth overall and best non-local while James Noble rounds out the top 10.

Back in MX2 Tony C completes his 11th victory in 15 GPs this year with a Dutch double and Tommy Gun makes the podium for the 10th time this summer but it's Gareth Swanepoel who stirs them up.

Swanny grabs the lead halfway through race one and still leads the Sicilian by two-and-a-half seconds going into the last lap. "I've never been in that position before and Tony's been there every week. I knew he was there as we came up on a group of four lappers and I took the inside line but he still went under me!"

Later in the day it's Aubin who feels the heat. With just four points between Swanny and Nico for fifth in the series they are racing head to head in race two. They cross the line side-by-side with Swanny half-a-wheel in front and the Frenchie hammers the bars with his fist. "Where are the rest going? Oh, sheet!" Nico thinks it's the finish but there's still a lap to go!

Final series standings

MX1

1	Steve Ramon (WMX GP Suzuki)	508 points
2	Kevin Strijbos (WMX GP Suzuki)	475
3	Josh Coppins (Yamaha Rinaldi)	452
4	Sebastien Pourcel (GPKR Kawasaki)	439
5	Ken De Dycker (CAS Honda)	421
6	David Philippaerts (Red Bull KTM)	419
7	Mike Brown (CAS Honda)	361
9	Billy MacKenzie (KRT Kawasaki)	351
11	James Noble (Multitek Honda)	270
21	Gordon Crockard (PAR Homes Honda)	102
29	Brad Anderson (Pioneer Yamaha)	32
42	Mark Jones (Wulfspport Kawasaki)	6
47	Neville Bradshaw (PAR Homes Honda)	3
54	Wayne Smith (PAR Homes Honda)	1

MX2

1	Antonio Cairoli (De Carli Yamaha)	660 points
2	Tommy Searle (Red Bull KTM)	510
3	Christophe Pourcel (GPKR Kawasaki)	436
4	Tyla Ratray (Red Bull KTM)	371
5	Gareth Swanepoel (Molson Kawasaki)	364
6	Nicolas Aubin (Ricci Yamaha)	358
14	Carl Nunn (Bike It/Dixon Yamaha)	198
20	Tom Church (Molson Kawasaki)	140
21	Sean Hamblin (Swift Suzuki)	133
23	Jason Dougan (ForkRent Suzuki)	94
24	Shaun Simpson (Wulfspport Kawasaki)	80
27	Martin Barr (Bike It/Dixon Yamaha)	67
30	Stephen Sword (Molson Kawasaki)	31
31	Carlos Campano (Bike It/Dixon Yamaha)	30
38	Jake Nicholls (ForkRent Suzuki)	10
51	Elliot Banks-Browne (Swift Suzuki)	2
52	Ray Rowson (Molson Kawasaki)	1
54	Lewis Gregory (Relentless Suzuki)	1

BOG TROTTERS!

The CAS Honda boys rise clear of the slop – and their co petition – in Cu bria...

Words and photo by Suttu

CONDITIONS ARE so deep and boggy during qualifying for the latest round of the Maxxis British MX championship that the title of Cumbrian fell scrambles series (eh!) would have been way more appropriate. Luckily the track dries up considerably – with the worst parts cut completely – for the afternoon's points paying races.

It's not only the on-track conditions that get better with time, it seems Mike Brown does too as the red plate holder does the double in MX2! Brownie creams 'em all first time out with the kind of start to finish display of dominance we're more used to seeing from his CAS Honda team-mate Ken De Dycker. Then in moto two the 35-year-old picks himself up after being taken down by fellow championship challenger Tommy Searle to win that one as well!

Tommy's just having one of those days and finds himself picking up and restarting the factory KTM in both races – in turn one of moto one and in the bog of impassable ruts second time out. Tommy's hard fought for 4-2 scorecard sees him slip a further 10 points back behind Brownie.

T'other top title contender coming into Brampton is Molson Kawasaki's Gareth Swanepoel who has an even more disastrous day than his ex-Molson team-mate. Swanny tangles with Tommy in the first turn melee of the opener – eventually fighting back to eighth – then backs that up with a solid but uninspired fourth in race two. Now sitting 23 points back from Brown it's unlikely that the South African will clinch the MX2 crown this year but will surely still play an important part in the final showdown at Pontrilas.

In MX1 Keeno keeps the Cumbrian CAS Honda win streak alive, leading every lap on his way to a seemingly simple double victory. While moto one's win is a mere stroll in the park for the Belgian beanpole, moto two gets a tad more exciting as Ken clashes with a lapper – Billy MacKenzie's kid brother Stevie – and ricochets right off the track! Despite Billy being able to close the gap and apply some pressure there's no beating Ken today.

MacKenzie's 3-2 finishes aren't an actual indication of how well the MX1 series leader rides on the day. Battling through the pack from a first turn fracas to second before being demoted a spot by Brad Anderson in race one, Billy's runner-up finish in moto two keeps the Scotsman eight points clear of Ken with just one round – that's two motos – remaining. With Ken skimming eight points from Billy's lead in Brampton it doesn't take a mathematical genius to figure out this championship battle is going right to the wire!

Third overall is local(ish) lad Brad Anderson who leapfrogs from fifth to third in the MX1 points race – overtaking both the injured Gordon Crockard and lacklustre James Noble – thanks to consistently strong finishes (2-3) on the Pioneer Yamaha.

Series standings

MX1

1	Billy MacKenzie (KRT Kawasaki)	342 points
2	Ken De Dycker (CAS Honda)	334
3	Brad Anderson (Pioneer Yamaha)	292
4	James Noble (Multitek Honda)	291
5	Gordon Crockard (PAR Honda)	251
6	Mark Eastwood (Wiseco Honda)	207
7	Jordan Rose (Albion KTM)	144
8	Jody Smyth (Wiseco Honda)	132
9	Danny Smyth (Wiseco Honda)	131
10	Neville Bradshaw (PAR Honda)	127

MX2

1	Mike Brown (CAS Honda)	328 points
2	Tommy Searle (Red Bull KTM)	316
3	Gareth Swanepoel (Molson Kawasaki)	305
4	Tom Church (Molson Kawasaki)	281
5	Shaun Simpson (Wulfsport Kawasaki)	264
6	Jason Dougan (ForkRent Suzuki)	232
7	Martin Barr (Bike It/Dixon Yamaha)	214
8	Carl Nunn (Bike It/Dixon Yamaha)	204
9	Sean Hamblin (Swift Suzuki)	178
10	Lewis Gregory (Relentless Suzuki)	154

Big Ken De Dycker's just eight points off MX1 series leader Billy MacKenzie with just one round to go







Tom Sagar's going great guns this season in the Enduro Junior class

SITTING PRETTY!

Juha Salminen, Mika Ahola, Ivan Cervantes and Joakim Ljunggren in pole to take top honours

Words and photo by Jonty Edmunds

HE'S COME close in the past and fallen at the final hurdle but after more than 10 years of trying, Honda-mounted Finn Mika Ahola is now just a handful of points away from becoming the '07 E2 world champion.

Fast, consistent and having avoided the costly errors that have denied him WEC glory in past seasons, Ahola does exactly what he needs to do at the GP of Slovakia and further extends his championship advantage ahead of the final round of the series. Followed home by Johnny Aubert and defending E2 champion Samuli Aro on day one, Mika fails to finish double top as Aubert dominates the class on day two to claim his fifth day win of the year.

Absent from competition in Slovakia is KTM's E1 class star Juha Salminen. Opting not to race having broken his collarbone just three weeks before the event, with a huge championship points advantage the six-time world champ remains at the head of the E1 standings despite Yamaha team-mates Cristobal Guerrero and Simone Albergoni topping the class.

With Salminen out Yamaha dominate the podium positions on both days as Guerrero and Albergoni are joined by France's Marc Germain on day one before the three riders again swamp the top three spots on day two. But despite the all blue and white podiums in Krompachy, Salminen remains 27 points clear at the top of the table.

In the E3 class Ivan Cervantes secures a double win to close in on world title number three. Pushed every step of the way on day one by Husky's Seb Guillaume, the Spaniard then wins each and every one of the second day's special tests to finish a country mile ahead of all other riders in the event.

Britain's best result in Slovakia comes thanks to EJ class rider Tom Sagar. Continuing the form that saw him claim a day win at the GP of USA, Tom comes home third on day one behind defending class champion Joakim Ljunggren and Frenchman Christophe Nambotin. On day two Tom holds second in class right up until the final test of the event where he crashes and drops one position to third.

"Day one went well but I was a little too slow on the enduro test. But my speed on the motocross test was good which is normally where I need to be faster. The second day was going really well until I crashed."

Series standings

E1

1	Juha Salminen (KTM)	300 points
2	Simone Albergoni (Yamaha)	273
3	Marc Germain (Yamaha)	257
4	Cristobal Guerrero (Yamaha)	251
5	Alessandro Belometti (KTM)	230
40	Ryan Voase (Kawasaki)	8
41	Ed Jones (KTM)	4

E2

1	Mika Ahola (Honda)	327 points
2	Samuli Aro (KTM)	292
3	Johnny Aubert (Yamaha)	274
4	Fabien Planet (KTM)	227
5	Stefan Merriman (Aprilia)	226

E3

1	Ivan Cervantes (KTM)	330 points
2	Marko Tarkkala (KTM)	290
3	Seb Guillaume (Husqvarna)	261
4	Bjorne Carlsson (Husaberg)	256
5	Alessandro Botturi (Honda)	226
11	Euan McConnell (TM)	74
19	Gordon Clarke (TM)	41

EJ

1	Joakim Ljunggren (Husaberg)	278 points
2	Christophe Nambotin (Gas Gas)	260
3	Tom Sagar (KTM)	223
4	Marc Bourgeois (Husqvarna)	207
5	Thomas Oldrati (KTM)	201
9	Daryl Bolter (Husqvarna)	87
13	Si Wakely (Husqvarna)	65
26	Greg Evans (KTM)	33

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HOT OR NOT?

IS THE ELITE YOUTH CUP MAKING THE GRADE OR MISSING THE MARK? WE FIND OUT...

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HOT OR NOT?

Words and photos by Mike Gurney

IS THE ELITE YOUTH CUP LIVING UP TO ITS CLAIM OF BEING BRITAIN'S BEST YOUTH SERIES?



Luke Hawkins



Scott Elderfield



Matt Moffatt

Welcome to the UK's premier youth racing championship – that's what it says nice and boldly on the front of the Elite Youth Cup race programme. Is it fact or fiction? A bit of an idle boast or backed up with some hard currency?

Running the whole shooting match are Matt Bates and Craig Elwell AKA the MC Federation – sounds a bit like an old mysterious '90s pop combo if you ask me. If you Google MCF you get sites such as the Manchester Chess Federation and the Minnesota Canoeing Federation – it made me laugh anyway!

Casually quiz the guys at the top and they'll tell you they're not looking to take over, just put on a damn good show and have some fun into the bargain. Well, if that's the case guys, mission accomplished so far and I'm pretty sure you'll make a little bit of cash along the way too if you carry on like this.

The four-round outdoor series this year has been a revelation and something of a revolution. With its own travelling roadshow of back-up workers and Matt and Craig dedicated to decisive decision-making, the MCF is able to give a continuity and experience that other bodies find hard to match.

Impressed with what I've seen so far, I tracked down co-promoter Matt Bates to find his thoughts on how things are going...

Rage: Being fundamentally quite different from other ruling bodies what's the basic background of the MC Federation?

MB: "We haven't intentionally set out to be different from any other organisation although when we set up the events side of the MC Federation that stages both the Elite and DEP two-stroke series we had a very clear vision to develop race events that through continuity create enjoyable and successful events.

"MC Events manages and stages our events, although MC Federation is a very separate organisation that over the next few years will develop in to a fully fledged federation that clubs, promoters and riders will be able to licence and affiliate to."

Rage: Does the MC Federation have a ruling body?

MB: "The MC Federation is the ruling body for events that are currently staged under the permission of the MCF – very similar to any other federation I guess. It's probably the hardest part of the job and from the outside looking in, staging an event can quite often seem fairly straight forward – but in today's litigation filled world we have to not only protect ourselves but everyone else that is connected to our events. One of our main objectives is to keep motocross a more safe form of motorsport."

Rage: With three major youth series already on the go what was the thinking behind introducing a fourth given that the BYMX will more than likely naturally attract all the best riders as a matter of course? Are there any areas where you think you have the edge or can offer a different experience?

MB: "I personally don't think that because the BYMX stages a series it should be regarded as the natural place for top riders. Don't get me wrong, the Elite series is just on the first step of the ladder but riders and families will take part in events that give value for money, are professionally organised and staged on well prepared race circuits – only then will they consider who the organisers are.

"Only time will tell where riders will end up racing and I'm confident there is room for more than one well respected series. At this moment in time the ACU have a highly regarded youth championship, fair play to them – there's been a great deal of effort from their side to get it there. I'm keen to let the events do the talking – I'm confident that if a rider attends an Elite round they'll be hooked."

Rage: Following on from the critical acclaim that the four-round Elite outdoor series has received this year are you in a position to announce plans for the future in either supercross or outdoor for '08?

MB: "Supercross has for the past 10 years been my life but I have to say at this stage it's looking very doubtful that we'll take on the massive risk of staging another series alongside the currently successful Future West series.

"As for the 2008 outdoor dates we're flat out looking at venues and a reasonable timetable which I'm confident we can announce by the end of October. This year we've had a four-round series and I see no reason why this won't increase to six for 2008."

Rage: Will you be giving any consideration to having possibly half the rounds on hard pack and half on sand for equality?

MB: "In our long list of criteria that's obviously something that's taken into account. At this stage though it's more about the position in the country as we have riders from Scotland, Northern Ireland, north and south England."

Rage: Will you be getting together with all other organisations to eliminate date clashes for next year?

MB: "Truthfully, probably not. As much as it always seems like a great idea, in reality it's never going to happen. However, we will contact the other federations and make them aware of our chosen dates and if dates do clash we'll do our utmost to move. I have first hand experience in date clashes and there is never a winner – only two losers!"

Rage: Will you be allowing 144 two-strokes into youth competition for next season?

MB: "It's an ongoing conversation at present – I think it's most important to listen and watch the consumer. If the demand is there then we'll cater for it in the best way possible. This isn't a cop-out but I've been in this position too many times where the sport is naturally developing and some decisions have to be made. There's no rush for a decision from our point of view – we'll cater for it all I expect."

Rage: How's the Tenerife week shaping up at the moment?

MB: "My phone hasn't stopped ringing but it's really important for people to understand this is a fun week in the sun for absolutely any youth or adult rider. You don't have to be a star in the making as you'll be treated no different to anyone else!"

Rage: What's the ultimate hope for next year's outdoor championship series?

MB: "For the sun to come out!"





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YOUNG ANSTIE WINS THE YOUTH DES NATIONS, FINISHES SECOND IN THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP AND TAKES CONTROL OF THE EUROPEAN SERIES – NOT A BAD MONTH REALLY!

I was lucky enough to fly to Bulgaria while my dad drove the 24-hour trek across the most remote and desolate parts of Europe ending up at the best motocross track in the world (Sevlievo). Once arrived we checked into the hotel at the track and got sorted.

Next day we woke up at 5am where outside the temperature was 25 degrees! We rode from about six until 10 before it got too hot. Luckily just down the road was a freezing swimming pool! When it cooled down in the evening we would go and ride again. We did this for the next few days until it was time to head to round six of the 85cc Euro championship in Samokov which was running alongside the MX3 world champs.

The track looked good but wasn't very difficult and with many good riders the times were much the same. I had a good qualifying session on Saturday taking pole position on the last lap but there were only a couple of seconds between first and 10th.

In the first race I got a really bad start. They messed up with the timing on the gate and held it for 11 seconds – they should have restarted the race but they didn't. Soon I was up in fifth but with the leaders a little way in front it was going to make it hard to catch them. Then about six laps in I went down!

I picked the bike up fast but it wouldn't start. By the time I got going I was in about 15th. I was lucky though because the series leader had crashed as well and when I got going again Jeffery Herlings and I were together. We both moved our way through as fast as we could but we ran out of time and I ended up 11th.

The second race was a different story. I got a pretty good gate and was soon in fourth. After a few laps it was just Clermont, Tonkov and me out front. I made my way around Tonkov then set my sights on the leader and a few laps later I scrubbed it by Clermont to take the win. I also took the lead in the championship – two points ahead of Tonkov – with the first four riders all within 10 points of each other.

The next day the team headed back to Holland while dad and I drove out to Italy to meet dad's girlfriend Abi and my little brother Taylor in Bologna airport. We then travelled the short distance to one of Italy's most famous tracks and one that has been recently used for the world championships – Faenza.

We stayed in a cool little place about two minutes from the track. We had some fun training then going on holiday for the weekend on a little island off the coast. The track was good at Faenza but not as good as the beach on the island where we were on holiday! It was surprising because there were not many people there and you could see Corsica.

After our holiday it was time to say goodbye again to Abi and Taylor when they flew home and we drove back to Bulgaria to get ready for the biggest race in the world for youth – the FIM youth world championship!

Technical was a breeze on Friday and walking the track I found out that it was in perfect condition. I have made this point before but I just thought you need to know again – this track is like no other. Everyone else was turning up and I met the rest of the British team which consisted of Tom Kelly, Sam Davies, Stephen Clarke and myself.

Practice on Saturday went well and I took third place in timed training with Jeffery Herlings taking pole ahead of Ken Roczen and I. The track felt really good in Sunday morning practice and I was ready for the race. I got a good jump off the line but was bar banging with a few guys so I got slowed up a bit. I came around in seventh and made some quick moves to work my way forward. By the time I was second Roczen had pulled a gap and after 25 minutes it hadn't changed much so the only chance I had was to get out in front in the next one.

Again I got a good jump and coming around the turn I was in third. On the first lap I got underneath Ken to take second. I knew I had to get out in front and try and put a gap on us so I jumped right over Jeffery Herlings' head on a massive triple that only I was doing! Ken also got around Jeffery in the next turn so it was just down to me and him. I held him off for about five laps until eventually going up one of the massive hills he got level with me and then had the inside on the next turn.

After being crowned vice world champion and Youth des Nations champions as a team, dad and Grampie drove home and I flew back with my mum. After a week with my mum, dad had a camp school planned at Henstridge but due to the rain it got moved back to our track in Andover. We had a great three days with the conditions being just perfect. The day after the camp we were on the road again to Italy but that's for next time.

Max

PS For more updates log on to www.anstieracing.com



FANTASTIC FIVE!

RAGE HOOKS UP WITH TEAM GREEN KAWASAKI'S JOSH WATERMAN

Words and photo by still-mx.co.uk

Team Green rider Josh Waterman is living proof that through determination almost anything is possible. Born profoundly deaf, Josh has risen through the ranks of the youth motocross championships to become one of the quickest riders in the country. We figured it was time we caught up with the furiously fast 15-year-old from the Forest of Dean to find out just how things are going.

Rage: How has your season gone so far?
JW: "So far my season has been going good. The 250F Kawasaki took a bit of time getting used to, a couple of times I have stalled the motor or dropped it and then not been able to start it when it's hot and this has cost me races. "I am doing four championships. The Elite Open 250F, BYMX Premier 250F, BSMA Senior 250F and Maxxis MXY2. In the Elite I am running second, the BYMX I am sixth, the BSMA I am first and in the Maxxis I am fourth."

Rage: Which riders have you had the best battles with during the races?
JW: "I have had lots of battles really but the biggest is when Alex Rockwell and I were battling for the lead at round one of the Maxxis at Landrake. I got the holeshot and had the lead for the whole race but Alex managed to

pass me on the last lap through the whoop section and he won the race, beating me by 1.061 seconds. I have also had some good battles with James Cottrell, my team-mate Lewis King, Matthew Moffat and lots more. Makes the racing more interesting."

Rage: Tell us what an average week holds for you – do you get out on the bike often and do you get the chance to ride with anyone from the races?
JW: "I try and go practising once a week with David Games in either sand or hard pack depending on the surface we'll be racing on at the weekend coming up. We put in a couple of motos then after that we go and play on the jumps. I swim once or twice and I get out on my pushbike often."

Rage: So what was it that first got you interested in motocross?
JW: "My dad did motocross and was such a goon I couldn't believe it. So I thought I would give it a try and I turned out to be pretty good so it just happened from there really."
Rage: What memories of your first ever race do you have – where was it and how did you do?

JW: "I can't remember my first races. But the first memory I have is with Dredgers on a 50cc KTM auto doing a series where the winner won a new 60cc KTM. I won the series."

Rage: How has your racing changed for you since those first steps into the racing world – do you still feel the same excitement when you go to the line?
JW: "In the early days it was just about having fun. Now the fun comes from winning races so it's a bit different."

Rage: You've been with Kawasaki for many years now, what's it like to be a member of Team Green?
JW: "Being a member of Kawasaki is a good experience, you get to meet the pros that ride for Molson Kawasaki and you get lots of support from them – it's a good team to ride with."

Rage: Who would you like to thank for the help you have received over the years?
JW: "I would like to thank Kawasaki UK, Bright's Auto Centre and Tillit Suspension but most of all I would like to thank my mum, dad, brother and friends that help me out."

PREDICTARIOT!

OUR MAN ON THE SCHOOLIE SCENE RECKONS THERE'S GONNA BE FUN AND GAMES AT THE FINAL ROUND OF THE BYMX SERIES...

Words and photo by Mike Gurney

With a late change of venue it's out of the sand of the magnificent Hawkstone Park and on to the hard pack of Brookthorpe in Gloucestershire for the finale of this year's BYMX series and what a show it promises to be – a real riot of entertainment.

Surely Ben Watson with an incredible 20 race wins from his 24 starts so far this year will wrap up the Junior 65cc class. Hopefully Jack (trick shot) Heath will be back from injury to fight it out for a tight second place with Callum Cooper – there's just three points between them right now in the standings.

If Robbie Muscat can reproduce the Haverrig form he might just be able to apply a bit of pressure to the Flying Scotsman Matthew Flemming in the Small Wheel 85s. Matthew has a healthy 65-point lead so it's a bit of a tall order for Robbie to close that gap but if anyone can Muscat can and the going at Brookthorpe should suit him down to the ground.

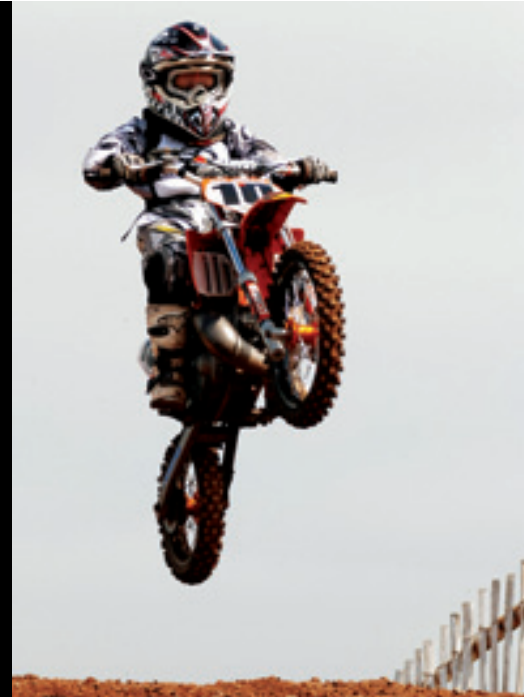
With an even greater lead of 85 points in the Big Wheel 85s, Sam Davis will surely just have to do what he's done all season to win the title. After saying that, I'm sure that Richie Worrall hasn't given it up yet and will be

chasing hard like he has all season. All eyes will be on the next four guys too – Connor Walkley, Josh Spinks, Dan McCanney and James Hutchinson. They'll be slugging it out for third place as there's just 45 points covering them all.

Possibly the tightest finish will be in the 125cc Intermediate section and if it goes to the last lap of the last race no-one will be surprised as it's been that kind of season. Lewis Tombs, David Games and Will Worden are all in with a chance of glory.

In the Premier division Alex Rockwell has the champagne on ice – and his bruised body too after the Brampton MXY2 crash – but it looks like Rocky will be off the bike right up to race day but with a massive lead of 146 points just one decent race finish will see the silverware on the ferry to the Isle of Man.

The battle for second could be a compulsive watch – the best of the season maybe? With Lewis King's Brampton performance signalling he's right back on top form, the battle with Matt Moffat and Mel Pocock – who have both been in superb late season form – should be dynamite! This is one not to miss as there's just 22 points between them.



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Entries for our Ride MX-backed Happy Snappers contest are flooding in on a daily basis as it seems plenty of you fancy grabbing hold of a Rob Herring training day voucher. The big winner this month is Sam Jackson whose mum Rosie sent in this Bryan Atkinson shot photo winning Sam a Rob Herring training day voucher with Ride MX!

To win a training day voucher of your own and to get your picture printed in Rage send us your favourite riding shot – maybe of you busting a berm, pulling a sick whip or simply gooning it up. If your picture is deemed to be the best by our expert panel of judges you'll not only win a Ride MX training voucher that's worth £75 but you'll also get your picture published in next month's Rage.

When you've chosen your favourite shot and you have the photographer's full permission to send it to us we want you to either fill in the coupon below and send the photo and form to us at Happy Snappers, DBR Magazine, 12 Victoria Street, Morecambe, Lancashire, LA4 4AG or enter online at www.dirtbikerider.com

Happy Snappers

Name.....

Age.....

Postal address.....

Daytime telephone number.....

Email.....

Photographer's name.....

Photographer's tel number.....

Dirt Bike Rider and Johnston Press Group are constantly running great offers. If you are not interested in receiving details of them by email, post, phone sms or fax please tick here []. If you are not interested in receiving details on offers run by our business partners please tick here []. For your information for quality and training purposes, we may monitor communications.



Sam Davis is looking good for the BYMX BW85 crown



Lewis Tombs is lining up the Inter 125cc title

LAIDBACK MAC

THE SEASON'S NEARLY OVER AND BILLY'S LOOKING FORWARD TO HIS HOLS - BUT FIRST THERE'S THE NOT-SO-LITTLE MATTER OF THE MOTOCROSS DES NATIONS



IT'S OVER, at last! Last round was at the weekend and what tougher way to leave the season than two 40s round Lierop! I came to Belgium early to train in the sand and lucky I did - I was like a kid with stabilisers the whole day Wednesday. I had the suspension tech from Kayaba with me and it was just embarrassing! He even admitted to me after qualifying that he didn't expect me to be anywhere close to the top 10!

It was a case of get on and ride it, don't even try setting it up, just dog it out and hang on! The track was as rough as ever and everyone was pretty relaxed around the pits considering the brutality of the track! I think everyone was just happy the season was coming to an end. It's so much mental pressure more than anything, trying to figure out things for the next week, working on your negative points etc.

Some people go through each week doing the same thing over and over but for me I am always wanting to improve, there is always something more you can do to be better and I have been trying a lot of things this year in prep for 2008. So I think I've got a good idea now of what needs done to be chasing the title next year.

First and foremost though is to have a holiday after the Nations! We've got three weeks hard work left and it'll be the hardest work we do all year. We've been maintaining fitness levels and going for points all year but now it's down to just balls-out, throttle-locked action. It's a lot of European riders' dream

to race in America and now we get to do it - and no-one is more pumped about it than me! I grew up watching all the American videos when I was young - McGrath and Emig were my heroes. I've slipped into the European way a little since racing the world championship but that is by no means a bad thing. In my eyes the world championship has grown and the riders have with it. My hero list has grown to Everts and, hate to say it because I still race him, but Tony Cairoli!

Although I secretly like the bullsh*t in America, I still wanna go there as a British rider and stick it to them! I think we have a strong team going there - we always do - but I think the track and stuff will suit all of us. Apparently the track is similar to Japan and I know all three of us like that track - especially me!

And even if it isn't, I've got it in my head that it is so there's already a positive mental attitude in place.

I was taken aback in Ireland when a lovely young lady popped over to the Kawasaki rig to say she had 211 tattooed on her. I wasn't there at first but the mechanics told me. At first I thought they were taking the p*ss but they spotted her in the crowd and pulled her in behind the screen in the awning. She was really nervous bless her and had to drop her drawers in front of the whole Kawasaki team to show us the tat. Don't worry, it was nowhere inappropriate - it was on her thigh. She asked me for a shirt and how could I refuse...

The British GP was a success for most and nice weather was defo a plus. I love the British GPs - the fans always make the British riders feel like celebrities! It gives us that edge over the competition because we already go to the line pumped up. Even when I was up the dodgems I had people coming up chatting away, it was cool! If I'd had some better results it woulda been a day to remember again but at least Tommy done it for you guys. Hopefully we can both do it next year, that would be a nice



weekend. I hear there are two British GPs in 2008, you heard it here first!

It's been a good year for me - not the greatest but still not one to write off. My first year as a factory rider for Kawasaki, winning another GP and meeting some great new people. The team has been fantastic and a special thanks to Luka my mechanic - it has been great working with all of them and I can't thank them enough. As a few of ya know, I'm on the move next year - but more of that later.

Well it's back to business as usual but, like I said, not long to go now before holiday time! Hope as many of you as poss can make it to the des Nations!

See you there!

BDM 11



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